
TWENTY
SERMONS
ON
SOCIAL DUTIES,
AND THEIR
OPPOSITE VICES.

T W E N T Y

SERMONS

ON

SOCIAL DUTIES

AND THEIR

OPPOSITE VICES



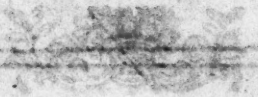
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AND THEIR

OPPOSITE VICES

THE SECOND EDITION

In which the FIVE last Sermons are now printed



L O N D O N

Printed for John and James Rivington
the Booksellers in St. Paul's Church-yard

M D C C X V I I

T W E N T Y
S E R M O N S
O N
S O C I A L D U T I E S,
A N D T H E I R
O P P O S I T E V I C E S.

V I Z.

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By PATRICK DELANY, D. D.
DEAN of DOWN. K

The SECOND EDITION:
In which the FIVE last SERMONS are now first Printed.



L O N D O N:
Printed for JOHN and JAMES RIVINGTON, at
the *Bible and Crown* in *St. Paul's Church-yard*,
M.DCC.XLVII.

TWENTY
SERMONS

ON

SOCIAL DUTIES

AND THEIR

OPPOSITE VICES

I. On the Importance of the Moral and Social Duties of the Christian.
II. On the Importance of the Moral and Social Duties of the Christian.
III. On the Importance of the Moral and Social Duties of the Christian.
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X. On the Importance of the Moral and Social Duties of the Christian.



BY RICHARD D. LAY, D.D.
SECOND EDITION

LONDON:
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M.DCCXVII.

TO

The Right Honourable

THE

Countess of GRANVILLE.

MADAM,

HAD not the purpose of this Letter been more to publish gratitude, than to pay court to power, Your Ladyship had been saved this trouble. For, indeed, the author of these Discourses has no talents for the latter. In saying this, he pretends not to acquit himself of ambition: he hath perhaps as strong a bias of original

guilt,

guilt, that way, as any mortal; but the truth is, it was early checked, and intirely turned from all hope or prospect of preferment, to the sole view of endeavouring to deserve it. In this situation, ~~he was found~~ by your son, near twenty years ago, in an honourable obscurity; and drawn thence, with some distinction, (tho' without any suit or solicitation on his side) a little more into the light, at least into the hurry of the world; where he hath continued to this day. Unhonour'd, indeed, but (I thank God) unreprouch'd, and (what is, perhaps, matter of more vexation than vanity) not unenvied; tho' he stood in no man's way, nor was rival to any mortal, during that whole time, either for wealth, preferment, or power.

He

He had been long, before this, a constant preacher: nor did his natural vehemence allow him to be indolent, or uninterested in what he delivered. His condition of life, and the circumstances of some particular friends, led him early to the consideration of almost all the following subjects; and a thousand subsequent occasions drew him frequently into repeated re-considerations of them: so that, what he now presumes to present to Your Ladyship, are, very truly, the first fruits of his early labour, and unwearied zeal in the service of Religion. How worthy, or unworthy they may be of Your acceptance, You and the World will best judge. Thus much, however, that World will allow, that there is no impropriety in the presumption; and that there are

few in it, to whom a treatise on Social Duties could so properly be addressed; and none (that I know of) so distinguish'd for Parental prudence, sollicitude, and success: for which *Europe* will bless you, as well as *Britain*. And tho' these Discourses had not been thus addressed, it were impossible for any reader of the least attention, to peruse some of them; to consider the distinguished eminence (there noticed) of the *Aurelia's* and *Cornelia's* of antiquity, in the education of youth, without seeing this Mother in a light of at least equal lustre. Nor was her care confined to One: it descended with equal sollicitude to All her Descendants. And I myself have had frequent occasions of being eye and ear-witness to her varied, incessant, and unwearied attention

tention to their improvements, in all the studies, employments, and pursuits, best suited to their condition and characters. I speak what I know: let those who have observed better, and know more, speak the rest.

M A D A M,

Another man, in my place, might find this a fit occasion to do more ample justice to Your character, as a Parent, by displaying the glorious effects of Your care, in the confessedly great and unrivall'd talents of Your Son, and many accomplishments of his issue. But this would ill become me; nor could it pass unsuspected in me, who am known to love him, and to have been early, and much, obliged to him; so much, that I have no need of adulation to
be

be more : (were it possible, that such
a fervility of spirit could be either
pardonable, or of use).

I pray God bless Him, and make
both the progress and conclusion of
his life worthy of his great begin-
nings.

I am, Madam, with equal duty
and gratitude,

YOUR LADYSHIP'S

14 NO 63

Most Humble, and

Most Obedient Servant.

Febr. 23.

1743.

P R E F A C E

THE

P R E F A C E.

THE Publishing of Discourses upon Subjects well understood, at least so deemed, from being often considered, naturally calls for an apology to the public; and in most cases confessedly needs it: but the real truth is, that the fundamental grounds and principles of all religious and moral duties, are not thoroughly and universally understood. (As the reader will, I hope, be convinced, from the illustration of some of them in the following Discourses): Or if they were, the whole extent of reasons for them,

and motives to them, is perhaps inexhaustible. The lights, in which the duties of life may be seen, are as various as the conditions and capacities of men, and the circumstances of time, place, and persons. And the delineations of them may naturally be as various, as the drawings of different painters, from the same statues, considered at different distances, and from different points of view.

Several men, from their several capacities, conditions of life, and occasions of observing, may see the obligations of the same Duties, in very different lights; some weaker, and some remarkably stronger: and therefore no precedent labours upon these subjects can supersede either the use or necessity of any subsequent.

Besides, that one man may have talents to shew the beauty of holiness to
more

P R E F A C E. xi

more advantage, to shew both social and religious Duties in a fairer and lovelier proportion; and adorned with graces irresistibly attractive; whilst the talents of others chiefly consist in aggravating the violation of such Duties, and drawing clear, and striking, and dreadful consequences, from such violations. Happy, in whom the Gifts of Nature, the Grace of God, the Love of his Laws, and Zeal for his Glory, have united these talents; with the additional energy of earnest and powerful exhortations, monitions, and deterrments. Who that man is, or whether any such writings are yet extant, the reader can only determine for himself. Let me however be allowed to premise in behalf of these Discourses, and their Author; that the Subjects here treated upon, are such, as fell early, and continued long, under his consideration:
and

and if they have not attained the praise of excellent Originals, they are as far removed from the reproach of servile Copies, Imitations, or Transcripts; and may, at least, be considered as Supplements to whatever hath been said on the same subjects, before.

I have no more to add, but my humble and earnest supplications to God, that they may in their use, and advantage to the cause of true religion and virtue, bear some proportion to the repeated care with which they have been compiled, and the christian zeal with which they are published.

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THE

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Preached on the Anniversary of the Martyrdom of King
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S E R M O N I.

Universal Righteousness absolutely necessary to social Honesty; as well as to the temporal and eternal Happiness of Mankind.

Ep. Gen. of St. James, Ch. ii. Ver. 10.

For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.

IT is a seeming inconsistency, that the mercy of God should be, every where in the Scriptures, represented as mitigating the severity of his laws, and rendering him compassionate to the errors and infirmities of his creatures; and yet he should, at the same time, be so very rigid, as to conclude men under the guilt of universal disobedience, for the transgression of any one single law. But this will be reconciled, if we consider, that the indulgence, granted by

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the gospel, is, first, to returning offenders, upon sincere repentance; and, secondly, to sins of error, ignorance, inconsideration, and such other infirmities as are inseparable from human nature, and, consequently, are involuntary, and unavoidable. And his indulgence, in these instances, is perfectly consistent; both with the ends of his government, and the authority of his laws: Whereas the severe sentence, denounced in my text, is against the wilful, habitual violation of some known law, where no such error or infirmity can be pleaded: And, therefore, if it should be found, upon inquiry, that such a violation of one law would be as destructive to all the ends of religion, as universal disobedience, I hope it will not seem hard or unjust to conclude, that *whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

Now that the habitual, wilful violation of any one known law of GOD, is as destructive of all the ends of religion, as universal disobedience, will appear from these two considerations:

First, That the authority of GOD is equally insulted and destroyed, by the habitual

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bitual voluntary violation of one law, as of all. And,

Secondly, That the ends of his government are as effectually defeated by transgression in one point, as in all.

First, I say that the authority of God is equally insulted and destroyed, by the habitual, voluntary violation of one law, as of all. And this is St. James's argument. All the laws of God are enjoined by the same authority: *For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now, if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.* And the authority that enjoins that law, is as much insulted, as if all were violated. It is absurd to pretend, that we offend in one instance out of inclination, and obey in another out of duty; for duty exacts universal obedience. *You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, saith Moses, Deur. v. 33. You shall not turn aside to the right-hand, or to the left.* Humour, or inclination, has nothing to do with obedience: or, if doing what we like, and neglecting what we do not like, be obedience, it is obedience to our own will, and not to the will of God. ---

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And, therefore, this kind of obedience is justly prohibited in *Deut.* xii. ver. 8. and 32. *Ye shall not do every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.* Ver. 32. *What thing soever the Lord commandeth you, observe to do it--- Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.* Again: *The soul that doeth aught presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord. Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, his iniquity shall be upon him,* Num. xv. 30, 31. And, indeed, it is impossible to conceive a greater reproach upon Almighty GOD, than such a submission as this: For it is, in reality, to despise GOD, at the same time that we profess to serve him; it is insult under the shew of obedience; it is casting off the authority of GOD, and setting up our own pleasure in its place: And whether casting off the authority of GOD doth not include in it the guilt of all possible transgression, let any man of common understanding judge.

Again, as the authority of GOD is equally insulted, so likewise is it equally destroyed, by offending in one point, as by offending in all; for universal obedience is essential to all legislative authority: I say, all legislative authority necessarily and essentially exacts universal

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versal obedience; it would else be useless: nor could it possibly subsist, if every man were allowed to choose in what point he would disobey it; for the variety of mens interests and inclinations would necessarily cause a variety in their choice; and when one man was allowed to violate one law, another a second, and so on, what would then become of the authority that enjoined them, when every law in the whole number would, by this means, be trampled under foot, and the legislative authority despised in every point? I believe it will easily be allowed, that all morality, and all religion, would quickly perish in consequence of such an obedience; and therefore that which would in its consequence destroy all religion, can never be consistent with any part of it.

But, secondly, As the Authority of GOD is equally insulted, and would be equally destroy'd, by the habitual known violation of one law, as of all, so the ends of his government will as effectually be defeated by transgression in one point as in all.

Such is the infinite goodness of Almighty GOD, that he always hath the happiness and welfare of his creatures in view. This is

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the great end of all his dispensations, and the evident purpose of all his laws. *Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee,* was the constant style of the Old Testament. And *We know, that in keeping of them there is great reward.* Happy is the people, saith the Psalmist, whose God is the Lord; for the Lord taketh pleasure in his people, and they shall be satisfied with his goodness; their inheritance shall be for ever, and they shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away. And the whole tenor of the Scriptures is to the same purpose. It is plain, then, that the great end of God's governing the world, and giving laws to his people, is in order to their happiness, both here and hereafter; the perfection of his precepts having a natural tendency to procure peace, and health, and happiness of every kind, in this world; and to inspire such a purity of mind and manners as will fit us for the conversation of angels and archangels, and make us capable of the beatitudes of heaven. Now, that these ends will be as effectually defeated by transgression in one point, as in all, will appear

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appear from these two considerations: First, That the evils derived upon society from such a transgression, will not be less than such as would follow from universal disobedience. And, secondly, That the morality of the mind will be as effectually defaced by habitual impiety in one instance, as in all.

First, I say, the evils derived upon society, from partial transgressions, from transgressing in one point, will not be less than such as would follow from universal disobedience: for, first, one man may bring as many and as great evils upon society, by repeated acts of the same vice, as by offending in as many others as he could. For example, A man that will not swear, nor allow himself in the vices of wine and women, but will cheat all mankind when it is in his power, and sets himself industriously to do so, with all the art and address proper for such a design; I say, such a man may unquestionably do as much, perhaps more, mischief in the world, by that single vice, than he that allows himself the greatest latitude in sinning: for, as, in trade, he that pursues one branch with all his industry and application, is commonly more successful in it, and attains all

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the ends of profit and advantage proposed from his industry, more certainly and universally than he that hath many projects on foot; and pursues many views at once; so likewise in vice, he that hath one favourite sin, and bends all his thoughts to the gratification of that one, will unquestionably pursue all its interests, and accomplish all its ends, more surely and successfully than he that indulges himself in a variety of pursuits; for different views and purposes call off the attention, and distract the mind; insomuch that some must be neglected, and perhaps none attended to as they ought. Besides that, the interests of different vices often interfere, and destroy each other; insomuch that if a man endeavour to be more wicked, he oftentimes finds himself under a necessity of being less so, in effect, than otherwise he would have been.

Again, A man that indulges himself but in one sin, is less suspected, and consequently may attain all the ends of his villainy at once, with more secrecy and security. When a man throws off all appearance of conscience and religion, mankind are upon their guard against him; there is something

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So hideous and detestable in avowed, bare-faced villainy, that the whole world is alarmed at it, abhors and flies it: and it will be hard for such a one to gain his ends upon the meanest mortal; whereas partial wickedness is covered and disguised by the appearance of some virtues that go along with it, that shroud and support it, and cover its deformity from the world; and therefore it very often attains its ends, safe and unsuspected. It is evident therefore, that the evils derived upon society, from transgressing in particular instances, will not be less than such as would follow from universal disobedience.

In the next place, that all morality in the mind will likewise be as effectually defaced, by habitual iniquity in one instance, as in all, will appear, if we consider,

First, That the great law of charity, or universal good-will to mankind, is the fountain and principle of all morality: all sin against our neighbour is a transgression of this law: the law is general, and the several particular duties of life are contained under it. And therefore he that allows himself to violate the general law, doth virtually

tuallly transgress all the particulars included in it: as he that cuts off the trunk of a tree doth effectually cut down every branch that shoots out from it. And therefore St. James argues very rightly: *If thou do not commit adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.* That is, the law of love; or as he himself expresseth it, *the royal law.* For, saith he, *if you fulfil the royal law according to the Scriptures, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.* The great law of love, or, as the moralists express it, of universal benevolence, obliges us to do all manner of good to all mankind, and to abstain from all manner of evil. And it is certain, that if we are influenced by any regard to this law, all the duties of it will be equally sacred to us: And therefore if we could look into the hearts of those men that allow themselves in the committal of particular sins, we should find, that they only abstain from others, either through want of inclination, or ability, or fear of greater evil. First, I say, for want of inclination; for, as corrupt as the world is, yet it hath pleased God so to oppose and balance the vices and passions

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passions of men, that scarce any are inclined to universal depravity: or, if they were inclined, they are not able. The powers of men are very happily limited by God, and no man is sufficient for universal transgression: and happy is it, that they are not; for if partial and limited wickedness produce so much mischief in the world, what would become of it, if the abilities of evil men were unlimited, and it were exposed to boundless and universal iniquity? But, at the same time, certainly there is no kind of virtue in abstaining from a vice from which we have an aversion, or which we are not able to commit.

Again, though men are able and inclined to vice, yet they are often restrained from it through fear of greater evil. It hath pleased God so to constitute his laws, that the violation of them is not only attended with eternal punishment, but likewise with temporal inconvenience; insomuch that evil and affliction are the natural, and almost inseparable attendants of vice: pain, poverty, and infamy, wait upon it; and it is no wonder, if these very often affright their votaries in their warmest pursuits.

For

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For example; There are some vices attended with considerable expence; such as luxury and intemperance: and these some men abstain from, because, as well as they love them, they are loth to indulge in them at the hazard of that poverty and ruin that waits them. There are others, who, tho' perhaps they could bear the expence, yet have not a constitution to support them in the pursuit; and therefore they abstain, because health and life are dearer to them. There is a third sort, who, tho' their fortune and constitution would bear them out in their extravagance, yet are withheld by opposite principles or pursuits; their avarice will not let them; shame forbids them; reputation, fear of authority, or persons they have a dependence upon, check their course. It is true, the world has the advantage of their abstinence, and they themselves shun, in a good measure, the numerous inconveniencies of their views; but yet it is evident, that in the eye of God they are not innocent, but are, in some degree, guilty of all the wickedness they had at heart to perpetrate; and from which they were not withheld by any motive of conscience, or
fear

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fear of God: But yet, on the other hand, it is hard to conclude these men under equal guilt with those that allow themselves a full loose in sinning; because there seems to be some degree of virtue in being withheld by shame and fear, and such other bars and restraints as it hath pleased God to lay upon us, in our way to vice.

In the next place, that all morality in the mind will as effectually be destroyed by habitual iniquity in one instance, as in all, will appear, if we consider, that the moral virtues have a near relation, and are closely connected with one another: And the breaking of one link will effectually dissolve the whole chain. And that this is no speculation, but true in fact, will appear, if we consider, that one sin lays men almost under a necessity of committing others; as robbers are sometimes forced to murder, in their own defence; and murders frequently beget other murders, to prevent discovery. Thus it is obvious, that lyars will swear, to support their falsehood; and drunkards must be idle and extravagant, and liable, at least, to every other vice. Thus it was notorious, in the primitive ages of Christianity, that
schisma-

schismatics easily became heretics; heretics, idolaters; and idolaters, murderers.

Homer informs us of *Clytemnestra*, that she began with cruelty and ingratitude, in banishing her guardian; she then proceeded to adultery; that was succeeded by hypocrisy, and an impious and blasphemous mockery of devotion, in thanking the gods for the success of her guilt; and she ended in murder. And the reason of all this is manifest: vices beget one another, like diseases; and it is in the mind as in the body, one ulcerated and corrupt part drains even the best humours to feed it, and converts them into like corruption.

But to pursue this matter a little more closely; let a man resolve to renounce every other sin, and yet allow himself in the single vice of drunkenness: In allowing himself in this vice, he must be idle and extravagant, he must neglect his family, impair his reason, his health, and his fortune, and hasten his end: he is incapable of discharging, as he ought, any one duty to himself, his Creator, or his country; he is at the same time in the power of every vice imaginable; lewdness in its worst forms and abomi-

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abominations; wrath, revenge, blasphemy; he is, upon the apostle's principle, worse than an infidel; because he neglects to provide for his own house; he is a bad husband, a bad father, a bad friend; he violates every duty to God, and to his neighbour; he transgresses (as occasion offers) every one of the Ten Commandments; his belly is his god; he is the idolater of his liquor; he takes the LORD's name in vain every moment; he profanes the sabbath, he dishonours his parents, he murders his best friends, and betrays their secrets; he commits adultery, in his heart, with every woman he looks upon; he robs his children and wife of their support, and their inheritance; he utters every folly and falsehood that comes into his head; and he covets every thing his silly eyes are set upon. So that we may say of this vice as of the evil spirit in the gospel; it is not a single devil, but it is legion.

Again, let a man resolve to allow himself only in the committal of one other sin; *viz.* to exact, extort, and oppress every man in his power, from day to day, and from year to year; to grind the face of the
poor,

poor, and to enrich himself by their spoils: Can it be made a doubt, one moment, whether a man of this character be not completely wicked? whether there be one corruption in human nature that is not deep at his heart? and whether this single man may not do more evil in the world, in the course of such a life, than a thousand other men, who might occasionally violate every one of the Ten Commandments? Or, take the matter in a far less flagrant instance; let a man resolve to allow himself only in the committal of this one sin; *viz.* To cheat and over-reach others in his dealings, as often and as much as he can—To compass this end, must he not endeavour to appear honest and fair in his dealings? must he not lye at least, perhaps too, swear, to gain credit to his smooth asseverations and pretences? that is, in one word, must he not allow himself in all the arts of hypocrisy, perjury, falshood, and fraud, as well as injustice? Does not this habit also include in it the guilt of the robber that assaults you in the highway, and the thief that invades you by night? Is he not the author of that poverty that starves your family to death, that tempts
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Ser. I. *necessary to Social Honesty.* 17

you to all sorts of vice and villainy, and barter your conscience and religion for bread? To say nothing of the evils he brings upon the fair and honest dealers, whom he causes to be treated as knaves and villains; whose honesty, however sincere, must always be suspected, for his sake, who abuses all the marks and characters of honesty, to all the purposes of villainy*. And therefore does not this one habit virtually include in it all kinds of evil and impiety? And consequently do you not transgress the whole law, when you offend in this one point?

To illustrate this in one instance more: Let a man disclaim all other vices, and allow himself only in this one; *viz.* To corrupt and ruin the virtue of as many women as come in his way: he will not steal, because perhaps his bread depends upon the credit of his honesty; perhaps, too, the success of his vice depends, in some measure, upon his being thought a man of honour. He will not steal, that is, he will not defraud you of a trifle; yet, at the same time, he will not

* Διὸ καὶ μάλιστα ἀξίος ἐστὶ μισεῖσθαι, ὅτι πονηρὸς ὢν, καὶ τὰ τῶν χρηστῶν σημεῖα διαρθείρει. Æschin. in Ctesiphontem, pag. 63. edit. Oxon.

scruple to rob his nearest friend of the greatest blessing of his life, the affection, esteem, and virtue of his wife; nor will he scruple to rob that dear friend's children of their inheritance, by substituting his own spurious issue in their place. He will not rob, nor murder, upon the road, because he fears the gallows; but then he will run in debt with all mankind, and is perfectly careless how many poor families are ruined by his extravagance: or say, he pays his debts, and performs his contracts in the common affairs of life, is he religious in so doing? Quite otherwise: perhaps his livelihood depends upon it; nor would he otherwise have wherewithal to support him in the pursuit of his favourite sin: so that it is not religion, but rather irreligion, that hinders him from committing that sin; one vice forbids another.

There is something so gross and shocking in this vice of corrupting women, that it is hardly possible to expose it as it ought: it is like some deformed creatures, too foul and too loathsome to be handled; its turpitude defends it; the bare mention of it is almost an offence to modesty: and yet,
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Ser. I. *necessary to Social Honesty.* 19

whoever has lived long enough in the world, to observe the dreadful effects of it, will easily conclude it infinitely flagitious and detestable; and to convince you, that it is so, we need only mention this one character of it, that it delights, above all others, in the ruin of innocence and virtue, than which nothing can be more devilish.

And, if we add to this, the misery and desolation it derives upon all families, from the highest to the lowest, the corruption of body and mind; the infamy, the poverty, the prostitution, to which it betrays the most helpless of the most heavenly part of the creation, we shall justly conclude it under a complication of unspeakable guilt; and consequently that he that offends in this one point, is completely guilty of all.

And the like may be observed of all other vices whatsoever; for vices are in alliance and combination with one another, as well as virtues; and any one in a very high degree, implies all the rest. It is impossible to indulge one evil habit without indulging many others at the same time; or at least contracting such a depravity of mind as disposes a man to transgression and

disobedience, in all other instances as well as that; and consequently kills all virtue within him.

And since one design of the divine laws is, (as I before observed) to inspire such a purity of mind and manners, as might fit us for the conversation of angels and arch-angels, and the beatitudes of Heaven; and since habitual iniquity, in any one instance, depraves the mind to such a degree as to deface all morality and purity from it, it is evident, that this end of the divine government will also be as effectually defeated by transgression in one point as in all.

And thus I have done with the several heads I proposed to treat on in this discourse: and I hope I have shewn, to your entire satisfaction, first, That the authority of God is equally insulted and destroyed by the habitual known violation of one law, as of all. Secondly, That the ends of his government would as effectually be defeated by transgression in one point, as in all. These ends, I shew'd you, were the happiness of his creatures in this world, and such a purity of mind and manners as might fit and prepare us for the beatitudes of
 5 Heaven,

Ser. 1. *necessary to Social Honesty.* 21

Heaven. As to the first of these, I shew'd you, that the evils derived upon society, from transgressions in particular instances, would not be less than such as would follow from universal disobedience; and consequently that the happiness of GOD's creatures in this world would as effectually be defeated, by offending in one point, as by offending in all. And, secondly, I shew'd you, that all virtue, all morality in the minds of men, will as effectually be defaced by habitual iniquity in one instance, as in all; and consequently, that it will render them equally and utterly disqualified for the beatitudes of Heaven.

The inferences deducible from this doctrine are very obvious:

And, first, It is obvious to observe from it, that refinement and perfection of virtue, introduced into the world by the Christian religion. My brethren, is this no more than heathen morality? Did their utmost extent of wisdom so much as suggest to them an idea of any thing so exalted and accomplished? Had even the *Jews*, who were infinitely better informed, any notion of such excellence? Quite otherwise! they imagined

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22 *Universal Righteousness* Ser. 12

that a zeal for any one virtue atoned for negligence and iniquity in all the rest: nay, have the boldest advocates for heathen perfection any idea of it to this day? Is it not yet a paradox, even to the best Christians? And yet, upon inquiry, all depends upon it! not the purity of religion and virtue only, but their very essence; and, in consequence of that, the perfection and happiness of the whole race of *Adam*, both in heaven and in earth.

In the next place, we may infer from this doctrine, the necessity of inquiring into our own state, and examining whether we indulge ourselves in any one habit of vice; for, if we do, all our imaginary virtues will avail us nothing: we may perhaps do some good in the world: but then we cannot do it from a principle of virtue. *Can the same fountain, my brethren, send forth sweet water and bitter?* No, if we are thus virtuous, we are virtuous upon the very same principles that we are vicious; because it pleases us, and is agreeable to us: we are virtuous to gain the esteem of men, or to gratify our vanity, or to comply with a strong natural propensity: we are virtuous
for

Ser. I. *necessary to Social Honesty.* 23

for the same reason that the historian observes of *Cato*, *Because he could not be otherwise*; but by no means upon a principle of religion or conscience: for, if we practised any one virtue, because GOD had commanded it, we should certainly practise every other in our power, for the same reason: and, if we avoided any one vice, purely because GOD had forbidden it, we should certainly avoid every other for the same reason: and therefore, if we allow ourselves in any one vice, it is certain we are not blessed with any one virtue.

From hence we may infer (and indeed it is melancholy to reflect upon it) the low condition of virtue in the world; for, if we strike off all those virtues that were born with us, that is, which we practise merely in consequence of our natural temper and constitution, all those that education hath inculcated, and habits confirm'd, without the impulse or assistance of religion; all, that fear, shame, reputation, and awe of authority, have bound upon us, without regard to conscience, or the fear of GOD; alas! what will remain with us at the foot of the account! We shall indeed have, in some mea-

24 *Universal Righteousness* Ser. I.

sure, the temporal felicity of many virtues, and the world will have some advantage from them; but where will be the merit, or the reward? It is true, these good dispositions are the surest foundations of virtue; and, if improved and cultivated from a sense of religion, will, without question, intitle us to the beatitudes of Heaven: but surely it is much to be feared, there is less real virtue of this sort in the world than is commonly imagined. If the church of *Rome* had considered this as they ought, if they had reflected, that no virtue can be placed to any man's account, further than as he practised it from a sense of conscience, and duty towards God; and that, even there, the influence of the divine grace left him but small share in the merit; and that no virtue, strictly speaking, was consistent with any habit of vice; they would find their fund of merit much lower than they imagine, (or at least pretend) and consequently that proud, presumptuous, pernicious doctrine would fall with it. They would find, that no flesh could boast in his sight, *who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*; that, should *he be extreme to mark what is done amiss,*

Ser. I. *necessary to Social Honesty.* 25

amiss, O Lord, who might abide it ! In one word, they would quickly conclude, with our Blessed Saviour, That, when they had done all, they were unprofitable servants.

In the last place, from the doctrine of my text, we may infer the necessity of guarding against our favourite vice. It is agreed, that every man living is more prone to some vices than to others : the corruption of our nature disposes itself differently, according to our different constitutions and habits ; and the point that tends to, is our favourite vice, which we are studious to represent in the most favourable light, and lessen the malignity of it with all our art and industry : we intercede for it, as *Lot* did for *Zoar*; *Is it not a little one ?* and flatter our selves, that we may compound with God for one sin ; and that, if we discharge our duty in other points, he will not be extreme to call us to account for this one : little considering, that every habit of vice is a mortal sin ; and that one mortal disease is as inconsistent with health, and as deadly, as a thousand ; that a mortification, or a gangrene, may as well begin from one point, as from any number ; and will as effectually over-

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26 Universal Righteousness Ser. 1.

run the whole man; that vices are connected; and that one sin, admitted to our heart, is like that evil spirit in the gospel, who, when he had taken possession, *brought with him seven more spirits, worse than himself*. And, lastly, That we have scarce more than one sin to contest with, *the sin that does so easily beset us*; that, tho' this world be a state of warfare, yet have we, for the most part, but one mighty enemy to combat; the rest are weak, and easily defeated. The corruption of our nature disposes itself to one point; and there, as in the breach of a fortress, we should be particularly watchful, because there is our greatest danger. And if we are so false to ourselves, and to the Captain of our salvation, as basely to desert or surrender the post he has appointed us to maintain; how shall we dare to appear before him! especially when we were assured of his support in the conflict, and might have taken up the whole armour of GOD for our defence; whereby we should be enabled *to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and to stand in the day of battle*. Stand therefore, my brethren, in the name of GOD; *having your loins*

Ser. 1. *necessary to Social Honesty.* 27

loins girt with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereto with all perseverance, that ye may be found faithful in the day of trial.— Which God of his infinite mercy grant, through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST.

SERMON

Set. 1. is necessary to Social Liberty. 272
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SERMON

S E R M O N II.

EPHES. V. 33.

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular, so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

TH E apostle's principal design, in this epistle to the *Ephesians*, is, to deter these new converts from all those corruptions that reigned in the heathen world, and exhort them to that purity of life and manners, enjoined by the gospel: that they should *put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of their mind, putting on the new man, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

Many of the deities worshiped by the heathen world, were the greatest monsters of

30 *Duties of the Married State. Ser. 2.*

of iniquity and uncleanness, that ever were heard of. And therefore it is no wonder, if their worshipers thought there was no evil in those actions, which were authorized by the example of their gods. Nay, on the contrary, forasmuch as all religion directs us to the imitation of what we adore, hence it came to pass, that the most flagitious and monstrous impurities were not only practised, but enjoined; enjoined as necessary rites of adoration, and actually performed in their very temples. And as this was the practice in many other places; it was remarkably so at *Ephesus*, (whither this epistle is directed) as we are assured by *Strabo* and *Athenæus*. And therefore the apostle's design, in this epistle, is to reclaim his converts of that city from those abominations, to which they were before devoted.

And, in order to do this, he gives them to understand, that the God they were now taught to worship, was a Being of infinite perfection and purity: and therefore to make their adoration acceptable to him, they must put off their former pollution, and imitate his purity: they must put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and put

Ser. 2. *Duties of the Married State.* 31

on the new man, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness.

For, however the guilt of their former corruptions might be alleviated from the ignorance in which they were then involved, yet were they now, from the advantage of better information and instruction, altogether without excuse, if they committed the same enormities. For, saith he, *ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light: but fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, or unclean person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

And soon after this, the apostle subjoins the duty of husbands and wives: the duty of submission and respect in the one, and of love and tenderness in the other: modestly implying, that a religious regard to the matrimonial contract was the most natural and rational method of avoiding those sensual corruptions, into which the heathen world was sunk. And when he hath shewn, that the original union of one man with one woman was an emblem of the mystical union of CHRIST and his Church, he adds, *Nevertheless,*

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vertheless, let every one of you in particular, &c. That is, But whatever this mystery may be, however, setting aside the mystery, let every one of you in particular, so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Having thus explained the occasion and intent of these words, I now proceed, from them, to lay down to you the duties of the married state.

I shall begin with the husband's duty to his wife. And this may be reduced to these three heads; love, fidelity, and support.

First, Husbands are to love their wives. And this they are engaged to do, from all the natural and moral motives that can influence a rational creature.

And, first, it is observed, that an equality is necessary to the establishment of an entire affection and friendship in life. For this reason, tyrants and slaves are no more to be tied together in the bands of love, than an ass and an elephant can be harnessed under one yoke. Equality is necessary to union; and therefore love is observed, either to find all persons equal, or to make them so. This the great Author of our nature well knew,
and

Ser. 2. *Duties of the Married State.* 33

and therefore he created the first pair perfectly equal; and, to express this equality, as divines observe, he formed *Eve* from *Adam's* side: the woman was taken from that part, rather than from any other, either higher or lower, to signify, that she is neither her husband's mistress, nor yet his slave: that as she is not to insult, so she is not to be insulted; but to be treated upon a foot of natural equality, with affection and regard.

Again, union is necessary to love; to have the same desires and aversions. For this reason, God Almighty made the first pair of one flesh. *And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.*

And this natural union of the first pair was but an emblem of that moral and mystical union, that was to be established between all succeeding pairs, that should be joined together in the holy state of matrimony, to the end of the world.

And hence it is, that, when *Adam* had declared his sense of this union that joined him to *Eve*, he adds, as from himself, (yet most evidently by divine appointment) *There-*

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34 *Duties of the Married State. Ser. 1.*

fore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they two shall be one flesh: Signifying, that the bonds of marriage should, from that moment, be more powerful than the bonds of nature; and that the tie of conjugal affection, which bound a man to his wife, should exceed the nearest and strongest ties of blood: and for that reason a man should forsake even his father and his mother, from whom he derived his being, and cleave to his wife, which was to be his second self, and, of consequence, nearer and dearer to him, even than his parents: as ourselves are nearer and dearer to us, than any other mortals.

AND indeed when we consider the nature of this union, we shall see evident reason, why man and wife should be nearer and dearer to one another, than any other mortals. For, first, they are united upon the terms of as intimate a correspondence, and as universal and intire a communion, as if they were one soul and one body. And, secondly, their interest is in all respects perfectly the same. That which tends to make one happy, naturally tends to make the other happy also: and that which tends to make the

Ser. 2. *Duties of the Married State.* 35

one miserable and uneasy, tends to make the other miserable at the same time.

THE interest of the nearest friends in the world, out of marriage, will often interfere; and it requires great generosity and disinterestedness, not to repine oftentimes at the good success of the nearest and dearest friends: because, how intimate soever their correspondence may be, their interests are still distinct, and often opposite. Nor is it possible to put a case, wherein they are, in all respects, the same, except in marriage.

SUPPOSE a brother that I loved as my life; yet still my estate is not his estate: my honour is not his honour: my children are not his children. But in marriage the case is actually so. Your estate is your wife's estate; it is actually her property, as much as yours. Your honour is her honour: and your children are her children; as dear and near to her, as they are to you; and the care of them, and provision for them, as much her concern, and her interest. And hence it is that the idea of an intire and perfect friendship is no-where to be met with but in the married state.

36 *Duties of the Married State. Ser. 1.*

I remember but three or four instances of extraordinary friendship, recorded by profane writers, in all antiquity: and three of these are downright poetical fictions. And the fourth, *viz.* That of *Alexander* and *Ephestion*, seems to have no better foundation than an extravagant imitation of *Achilles* and *Patroclus*: or, suppose it established in a particular inclination and interest, it was, in this view, no more than such as might engage any two men of honour as nearly, to this day: and, no doubt, hath and doth engage thousands, every day. Nor was it founded either in a similitude of manners, (which is its surest basis) or in a fixt union of universal interest.

THERE is also one authentic instance of extraordinary friendship, in sacred history, *viz.* That of *David* and *Jonathan*. And this, altho' founded in a similitude of manners between two generous and martial youths, yet seems to be raised much above the common level, by divine appointment; for the preservation of *David*. And yet, perhaps, had *Jonathan* out-lived the generosity of youth, and seen his friend placed high above him; his friend a sovereign, and himself a subject;

Ser. 2. *Duties of the Married State.* 37

subject; his friendship would not have so intirely survived his ambition and interest.

WHEREAS in marriage, where the union is for life, and the interest is always the same, the reasons for mutual affection and confidence, must always continue, and increase with generous and virtuous spirits, to the last moment of life. To say nothing of those powerful engagements to love and tenderness, from the natural attractions of a modest and amiable woman; and those thousand endearments, (no-where else to be met with) which GOD hath, in his great wisdom, established for the continuance of so useful a commerce, without which society could not subsist.

AND nothing surely can be a finer emblem of this union, than the two pieces of wood which GOD commanded the prophet *Ezekiel* to join together, and they became one in his hand, *Ezek. xxxvii.* the marriage tie being, by the divine command, like the covering and inclosing rind, which bound both into one body, circulating all the mutual and endearing offices of affection and interest thro' the one, in the marriage

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38 *Duties of the Married State.* Ser. 2.

union, as the nutritive and vital juices are circulated thro' the other, in the natural.

THE next duty that husbands owe their wives is fidelity.

As the laws of GOD and nature oblige you to love your wives with distinguished affection and tenderness, so do they oblige you to love them alone. And this is what is meant by fidelity in the married state.

AND this duty is demonstrably founded in the law of nature. For since it appears by accurate observations upon the increase of mankind, that there are more males born in the world than females; and that, in a constant and established course, in the proportion of about thirteen to twelve, nearly; and since the right of marriage is a right of nature, which all men have equal claim to, and yet this right cannot be obtained, if any number of men be allowed to have many wives at once, therefore no man must have many: because, as many wives as such men have above one at once, so many must such a number of other men want.

IF one man, for example, hath twenty wives to his share, nineteen men must of necessity be robbed each of them of their
natural

Ser. 2. *Duties of the Married State.* 39

natural right. And consequently if it be agreeable to the law of nature, that nineteen men should have nineteen wives, then it is directly contrary to the law of nature, that one man should have twenty wives, or any number above one at once.

AND that this union of one man with one woman should be for life, is evident from our blessed Saviour's express words: *What God hath joined, let no man put asunder.* And therefore if man cannot, must not put them asunder, they must continue together, till it please GOD to part them by death. And so far was GOD from intending to part them before, that he plainly intended they should sooner part with every thing else, even their nearest and dearest friends. For this cause, *shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife.*

AND indeed if this union were to continue only at the discretion of either party, or for any term less than life, the evils that would be devolved upon society, from such a limitation, would be infinite: the great engagement to peace, and mutual love, would be dissolved: all the trust and confidence of the perfectest friendship would be intircly de-

40 *Duties of the Married State.* Ser. 2.

stroyed: the assurance of consolation in distress, of support in sickness, and society in age, would be taken away from the earth: and the interests of families would be torn into ten thousand distractions. In short, the evils of life would be infinitely multiplied by it, and its greatest blessings infinitely impaired.

AND certainly if marriage is not to be allowed upon any other than the Christian scheme, much less is adultery, or fornication, to be endured upon any pretence whatsoever; since all the arguments either against arbitrary divorces, or in other words, either against temporary marriages, or a plurality of wives, conclude with much greater force against both these vices; inasmuch as these vices naturally tend to destroy all the blessings and securities of love and friendship. They create endless jealousy, and contention, and distrust: and either ruin your fortune, or divert it from its natural course. And in the next place, it is impossible for you to indulge either of these vices, without allowing yourself either in the corruption of innocence, or the enjoyment of corruption; and either of these naturally overwhelm the
soul

Ser. 2. *Duties of the Married State.* 41

soul with so much confusion, and distraction, and remorse, as must, if you are not hardened into the malignity of fiends, either conclude in the bitterness of repentance, or in the distractions of despair.

FOR certainly if you think at all, you cannot bear the reflection of having corrupted innocence; of having betrayed a virtuous and valuable woman to infamy, and all the dreadful evils that await it, to poverty and prostitution, and such a corruption of body and mind as will render her, at once, the reproach and horror of human nature.

ON the other hand, can you, with less reproach to your reason, give yourself up to the arms of a prostitute? To mercenary and polluted embraces? To the wiles of serpents, that twine around you, for no other reason, but to prey upon you, and sting you to death?

AND to deter you from such a shameful and corrupt course, read *Solomon's* reflections, read the observations of the wisest of mankind, upon the danger of such a conduct, and the sure ruin that awaits it, in the viith and viiith chapters of his proverbs.

To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman,
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42 *Duties of the Married State. Ser. 2.*

lust not after her beauty in thine heart, neither let her take thee with her eye-lid. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his cloaths not be burnt? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt? So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife, whosoever toucheth her, shall not be innocent. And surely it is full as certain, that he that goeth in to a polluted prostitute, whosoever toucheth her, shall neither be innocent nor unhurt: but doth, in truth, take fire into his bosom, almost in a literal sense.

AGAIN, saith the wise man, *Whoso committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding. He that doth it, destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.* Nor is either the wound or the reproach less certain in the commerce of a mercenary harlot. The arts with which these wily creatures lie in wait to deceive, at once to deceive and to destroy the thoughtless unwary part of mankind, are most admirably set forth in the viith chapter of the *Proverbs*; where, after the wise man hath described the lewd woman's shameless allurements, at large, he then adds the sure ruin
of

Ser. 2. *Duties of the Married State.* 43

of the simple one that was caught by them :
*With her much fair speech she caused him
to yield : with the flattering of her lips
she forced him : he goeth after her strait-
way, as an ox to the slaughter, or as a fool
to the correction of the stocks : till a dart
strike thro' his liver ; as a bird hasteth to
the snare, and knoweth not, that it is for
his life. Hearken unto me now therefore, O
ye children, and attend to the words of
my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to
her ways, go not astray in her paths. For
she hath cast down many wounded : yea
many strong men have been slain by her.
Her house is the way to hell, going down to
the chambers of death.*

AND altho' vitious liberties are common-
ly regarded as less criminal on the side of the
man, yet in reality, and in the sight of GOD,
it is not so ; because the obligation to fide-
lity is equal, is exactly the same, on both
sides. And therefore the same apostle that
tells us, 1 Cor. viith, *That the wife hath not
power over her own body, but the husband ;*
tells us also, in the same place, *That the hus-
band likewise hath not power over his own
body, but the wife.*

44 *Duties of the Married State. Ser. 2.*

It is true, the reputation of families is more concerned in the chastity of the wife: but on the other hand, the interest and well-being of families is, for the most part, more concerned in the chastity of the husband: because he hath it more in his power (generally speaking) to destroy the fortune of the family by vitious extravagance in this point, than the woman hath: and actually does so, in twenty instances to one. And therefore, however men may be indulged in corruptions of this kind, from the liberties of a looser education, and from the worst title in the world, the privilege of a long practice in sin; perhaps too from the partiality of human laws; yet are they, both from the law of nature, and the law of God, under equal ties of fidelity with the wife; and under equal guilt from the violation of it. And this we know, that *no whoremonger, or unclean person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God.* And therefore, *let no man deceive you with vain words; for, because of these things, cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

Ser. I. *Duties of the Married State.* 45

THE last duty of the husband, is to support and maintain his wife. And this ariseth from the consideration of their being one flesh. Therefore the apostle tells us, that *men ought so to love their wives as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever yet (saith he) hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord, the church.*

FROM hence it appears, that the same obligations that are upon you, for your own support and nourishment, engage you also to the support and nourishment of your wives. And this is accounted the more direct and immediate duty of the husband, because the administration and management of the fortune, is (generally speaking) in his hands; that, being, by the divine appointment, his province: as being better fitted by nature, for the fatigues and hurry of life: and, for the most part, endowed with a greater strength both of body and mind, to enable him to make a proper provision for his family. I say, for the most part, because there are many particular instances, where this care rests chiefly upon the wife, when she is found blessed by almighty GOD with better talents

46 *Duties of the Married State.* Ser. 2.

for those purposes. But, generally speaking, the business of the woman is the care of her house, and family: to relieve the man from the fatigue of domestic concerns; and to be, in this respect a *help meet for him*; and to see, that what he provides, is prudently managed, and carefully preserved.

AND thus I have gone thro' the several duties which the husband owes to the wife, *viz.* Love, Fidelity, and Support.

SERMON

S E R M O N III.

EPHES. V. 33.

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular, so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

I PROCEED now to the duties of the wife; and these are, Love, Fidelity, and Obedience.

FIRST, She is to love her husband: and that, upon the same principles, and for the very same reasons, that he is to love her.

FIRST, Because they are one flesh: *For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they two shall be one flesh.* And in truth they are joined together upon terms of as intire and thorough a communion, as if they were one soul, and one body: and, secondly, Because their interests are, in all respects, perfectly the same; which is the truest foundation of friendship. The husband's happiness naturally tends to make the wife happy, at
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the same time ; and his misery, to make her miserable ; his riches make her rich ; and his poverty makes her poor. It is always their interest to wish, and avoid, to desire, and to detest the same things : and surely to have the very same interest, the same desires and aversions, to be happy in each other's happiness, and miserable in each other's misery, are the strongest engagements, and the surest foundations of intire friendship, and perfect affection, that can possibly be imagined.

SECONDLY, She is to be faithful to him ; and as the reasons of fidelity are the same both in the husband and the wife, the crime of infidelity is more shameful and scandalous in the woman ; because it is committed against the rules of a more reserved and virtuous education, and against the natural decency and modesty of the sex : and, at the same time, is of far worse consequence to the honour of families ; because it brings a lasting stain of infamy along with it. And, what is worse than all this, it often robs the right heir of his inheritance, and substitutes a spurious offspring into his place ; an injury that is the more to be dreaded and avoided, because when once it is committed, it is impossible to be repaired.

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THUS much, however, may be said in honour of that sex, that this crime is less frequent among them; and rarely committed till the husband's infidelity, or ill conduct, hath first provoked to it. And this is the true reason, why the infidelity of the wife reflects so much scandal and dishonour upon the husband; because (generally speaking) his own vices and ill conduct have brought the evil upon him. And therefore the only true way of securing your own reputation in this point, as well as your wife's virtue, and the honour of your family, is to behave yourself with so much fidelity and tenderness towards her, as may entirely ingage her affections, as well as her conscience, to you, and you only.

AND indeed, let any man reflect seriously upon the treatment the generality of wives meet with from their husbands, and then think impartially, whether they have not too much reason to be provok'd at their rudeness and neglect. Before marriage they are adored, and preferred before all the world: but soon, very soon after, they are slighted and disregarded, as if they were unworthy of common esteem; and they are slighted, for the

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very same reasons, for which they should be respectfully and tenderly treated. They observe at the same time, that their husbands can still treat other women with respect and complaisance: and that other men still continue to use them with respect and complaisance; and none, but the husband, slights and despises them: as if marriage, which is the strongest engagement to tenderness and affection, were but a privilege for contempt and rudeness. This is in truth provoking; and I am satisfied, the generality of those women, who have been so unhappy, and so wicked, as to violate the marriage vow, have been provoked to it, by the rudeness and neglect of their husbands; or urged to it, in revenge of their prior falshood.

It is not indeed to be imagined, that men should treat their wives with the same reserve, and formal complaisance, after marriage; that, the freedom and ease of friendship forbids: but why friendship and freedom should be a reason for ill-treatment, I must own I cannot conceive. I am sure they should be reasons of a very different conduct: and I believe there is not a righter rule in life, or of a more importance for the preservation

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servation of friendship, than this, never to let familiarity exclude respect.

BUT, after all, wives that are so unhappy as to be too much provok'd by the ill treatment of their husbands, should always remember, that their husbands guilt doth not justify theirs: and much less will neglect or rudeness in the husband justify infidelity in the wife. There are arts of decency and

good behaviour, which have inexpressible charms; and if a woman can but have constancy enough to practise these, and to continue in well-doing, they are almost irresistible: and it is scarcely possible to imagine any husband so brutal, as not to be at last reclaimed by them. And women would be more solicitous to reclaim their husbands in this manner, by a course of good behaviour, if they considered, that, in so doing, they consulted their own real interest, and the interest of their children; and greatly recommended themselves, and their concerns, to the favour and protection of Almighty God; and, at the same time, *saved a soul alive.*

Whereas the contrary behaviour can tend to nothing but the utter ruin of their chil-

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dren, and their own mutual destruction, both of body and soul.

THE next duty a wife owes her husband, is assistance; that is, aid, comfort, relief, and support, in all the anxieties and exigencies of life. And hence it was, that when *Adam* was created, God Almighty declared it not good for him to be alone; and therefore he adds, *I will make him a help meet for him.* And therefore such wives, as think it beneath them, to trouble themselves about low domestic concerns, that are above the care of their husbands and family, would do well to consider how they answer the end of their creation. Surely they cannot imagine, they were made for no higher or nobler ends, than to dress, or visit, or to be esteemed, like a statue or picture, for a fine shape, or a fair outside. Are these purposes worthy of infinite wisdom and goodness? No, God Almighty intended them, not only for the support of society; but for consolation, friendship, and assistance; to be partakers of the husband's joys and cares; to lighten the labours of life, and increase all its enjoyments, by sharing in them. For, as cares are lessened by being divided, joys are increased by being com-

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communicated. And therefore what can be more desirable in life, than to have a prudent, a faithful, and an affectionate friend, who is perfectly in our interest, to alleviate all the evils, and increase all the happinesses that befall us? And to this purpose, God Almighty hath endowed the other sex, not only with more native tenderness, but likewise with a certain vivacity and gayety of heart that bears up against misfortunes; or, at least, is not so long cast down under them, as men usually are. Their spirits are more light and volatile, and their imagination more sprightly; and this prompts them to think and speak a thousand agreeable things, which would never enter into the heavy heart of an anxious and thoughtful husband; and by that means inspires a cheerfulness which is not natural to him, and is a wonderful relief to the toils of life. And, without question, this is one great reason, why God Almighty hath endowed the other sex with a greater quickness and readiness of speech upon common occurrences; that, the husband, upon his return into his house from the cares and labours of the day, might be entertained with cheerful accounts of his family affairs; and with agree-

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able inquiries into his own conduct; not without pleasing and proper reflections upon both. And therefore that disposition to discourse, which melancholy and morose husbands are wont to censure as troublesome and impertinent in their wives, is, in truth, an instinct most wisely and graciously appointed of Almighty God, for the relief and joy of the conjugal state; and life would, in endless instances, be an insupportable load without it.

WHAT therefore women are concerned to do upon this account, is this; not to speak less than they are naturally inclined to do, but to endeavour to speak better, than the generality of them are taught, or wont to do. It is not their business to check the instinct that God Almighty hath endowed them with, but to direct it, and make it answer its true end, the relief and delight of their husband, and their household; whereas, when it is diverted from its right end, and degenerates either into impertinent garrulity, or into brawling and abuse, it forms one or other of the most hateful and unbecoming characters in life. And therefore *Solomon* rightly observes, *Prov. xxi.* That it is better

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ter to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house. That is, it is better to be confined to one spot on the top of a house, exposed to all the injuries of the weather, than, enjoying all the advantages of shade and shelter, to be exposed to the assaults of a boisterous tongue. And again, *It is better to dwell in the wilderness,* saith he, *than with a contentious and angry woman;* that is, it is better to be banished the society of mankind, than be confined to such society as that.

Now, there are two things required of women, in order to make their conversation agreeable: The first is, *the ornament of a meek spirit,* without which no other ornament will become them. And this, the apostle assures us, *is in the sight of God of high price:* nor is it less so in the eyes of men. The next is, that they endeavour to furnish their minds with a store of useful observations, for the conduct of life; from a competent knowledge of the manners and history of the world, a thorough acquaintance with the holy Scriptures, a particular and exact study of their husbands inclinations and inte-

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rest; and a careful inquiry into the œconomy and good government of their family: and this, joined to a fund of virtue and good humour, will rightly direct their natural instinct, and make their conversation equally agreeable and useful; will give them new and lovelier charms, when those of youth and beauty are long since wasted and decayed.

AND here I cannot but reflect with concern, upon the unhappy methods which have obtained in the world in relation to the education of women*. One of the first things that takes possession of their minds, is the hopes of a husband; but how to become a faithful friend, and an agreeable amiable companion in the married state, are lessons rarely taught, and more rarely learnt. Superficial and shewy accomplishments are indeed inculcated with sufficient care; but how to acquire solid worth, and useful knowledge, makes, for the most part, but a small part of parental solicitude. By this means

* Among the many complaints but too justly made by women of sense upon this head; there is one very properly introduced, in the person of a lady of distinction, in the eleventh dialogue of that excellent book called *Nature Displayed*; Vol. I. Part II. p. 41.

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a woman becomes every thing to a husband, but what she should be; a social friend, and an useful assistant. Forgetting, that the interest of all men makes that, one essential part of the character of a good wife, laid down by *Solomon*, *Prov.* xxxi. 26. That *she openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.* That is, As she hath acquired habits of prudence and discretion from study and observation, so she hath made it a fixt rule to herself, not to be imperious or presuming upon her knowledge; but rather, to make it a reason of constant chearfulness and good humour; together with a ready, a rational, and an affectionate assistance in every exigency, and on every occasion; *in her tongue is the law of kindness.* And surely wisdom, so seasoned and sweetened, is amiable and delightful beyond expression. And therefore this character is crowned by *Solomon* with that noble encomium, *Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.* That is, Many other women may be as virtuous; but virtue thus recommended, virtue that is adorned with all the graces of prudence and good humour, is virtue in its highest and lovellest

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loveliest perfection; *Thou excellest them all.* And again, *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.* That is, the regard that ariseth from colour and complexion, is transient and unsteady; beauty is deceitful, a fair face may cover a deform'd mind, and is at best a short and uncertain commendation; but piety and virtue are sure and lasting perfections, which will always intitle the woman, that is blessed with them, to eternal veneration and esteem.

BUT further; a good wife is, in many instances, to do yet more than this; she is, not only to relieve her husband under his household cares, by the goodness of her humour, and sprightliness of her conversation; but she is likewise to lighten those cares, by dividing them with him, and bearing her part in the burden. And therefore the least that is to be expected from a wife, is, that whilst the husband is busied abroad, or in affairs that call off his attention from the care of his family, that care be supplied by her: and this constitutes the true character of a good wife; at least that part of it which is of principal and most universal use in life.

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THE care and good oeconomy of a family is a business of a very distinct nature from that of making a provision for the support of it: the care of providing for a family, for the most part, resteth upon the husband; because that is a business of more labour and fatigue, than women are ordinarily able to undergo; but then the administration of what is so provided, is the woman's province: thus is the labour of life divided; and, if either fail in their proper business, the affairs of the family are in a ruinous way. And upon this is founded that known observation, That a man must ask his wife whether he shall be rich; forasmuch as few men are able to take sufficient care both abroad and at home; and foreign care will be of small use, if the domestic be neglected. And therefore it is, that *Solomon*, in the character of a good wife, *Prov. xxxi. 11.* tells us, That *the heart of her husband shall safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.* That is, She will manage his household affairs, with so much prudence and fidelity, that her husband shall need no indirect methods of fraud, or oppression, to support her luxury and extravagance. Again,
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he tells us, v. 27. That *she looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.* Indeed he adds many other circumstances of great industry, such as her rising up by night, and plying the spindle and distaff, and providing cloaths for her husband and family; but these being circumstances of industry peculiar to a country life, and better adapted to the simpler ages of the world, when trades were not sufficiently settled and distributed into their distinct classes, I think them not necessary to be insisted on in this place.

Now, as the care of the house and family is the immediate and direct duty of the wife, it is evident, this duty cannot be discharged if she be addicted to rambling and going abroad, and do not delight to dwell with her family; and, indeed, a disposition to running abroad, and neglecting the care of her household, is an argument of a light and vain mind; and is made, by *Solomon*, a mark of the most infamous character among women; for, when he describes a vicious woman, in the tire and habit of an harlot, he tells us, *she is loud and stubborn, her feet abide not in her house.* And therefore all women that
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would be deemed modest and virtuous, should avoid this character of neglecting their husbands and their homes, as a piece of ill conduct, that will lead them into many others; and such as seldom end but in infamy and ruin.

Solomon hath observed, that the ant is a fine emblem and example of industry; and the observations of modern naturalists have made this emblem yet more instructive to us, in the distribution of the conjugal care. The male ants, they tell us, are at a certain age furnished with wings, to facilitate their acquisition of food; whereas this advantage is denied the females, inasmuch as their province is the distribution of what is acquired.

ANOTHER principal and very important branch of the wife's duty, is the education and care of her children. For the business of the father being for the most part without doors, and the man being, from education and use, less fitted for the lower cares that are due to children; having, also, less leisure to employ that way; having less gayety, to cheer and enliven their humours, and less natural tenderness to relieve all their little

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wants and afflictions; having, from nature, a stronger propension to fullness and silence; and being upon that account, less fitted to gratify the eager curiosity of children, in their endless inquiries after every thing that is new, or unknown to them; for these reasons, and upon all these accounts, the early education of children rests almost intirely upon the wife; and she is, in truth, by nature, much better fitted for it.

AND, in order to qualify her for so great a trust, upon which the well-being of every family, and, consequently, of the whole world, doth so greatly depend; it is requisite, that her mind be rightly formed, by a thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures, and some few useful books of devotion, to humility and meekness; to temperance and diligence; to humanity and charity; and, in one word, to all the virtues of a social and a christian life. And, besides all this, it is necessary, that she be furnished with a competent knowledge in the employments and accomplishments proper to each condition and age in life; that so she may be capable of directing her children, how to employ their time, agreeably and usefully, and conduct them gradually

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gradually to virtue and goodness by her practice, as well as her precepts. And altho' the mother's principal business be, the education and care of her daughters; yet her sons also, claim their part of instruction and improvement at her hands; forasmuch as they remain some years intirely under her tuition; and the goodness of their mind and manners depends mainly upon the first impressions they receive; upon the first formation of them, to knowlege, and virtue, and piety.

AND, however mothers may, in these ages, be thought unequal to such a task, they were not anciently so esteemed of; but were remarkably successful in the education of some of the greatest men of antiquity. Thus it is well known, that *Cornelia* the mother of the *Gracchi*, and *Aurelia* the mother of *Cesar*, had a principal hand in forming those men, who were the glory of their age; and we have yet left an excellent lecture to king *Lemuel*, (with good reason believed to be *Solomon*) which his mother taught him.

INDEED the case is now, in a good measure, altered, from the present course of education, which (as it respects the better sort) depends mainly upon a knowlege and

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a mastery in the learned languages, which women do not ordinarily attain to; but then, on the other hand, it ought to be remembered, that virtue and good sense are to be learnt in every language; and forasmuch as morality and religion are now much better understood, than they were in the heathen world, the instruction of children, in all the important duties of life, is now a work of much less difficulty than it antiently was.

AND, that mothers may be the better enabled to go through with this great task of education, it is absolutely necessary, as I before observed, that they be perfectly well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, so as to be able to apply all the precepts of them to all the duties in life, to every purpose, and every occasion, that shall offer; and also to be well versed in the most useful and approved treatises that have been published upon the subject of education; such as those of Mr. *Locke*, and the archbishop of *Cambray*. And this is the true way for all mothers to intitle themselves to that real veneration, and sincere esteem, from their children, and from their husbands, which compels

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pletes the glorious character of *Solomon's* virtuous wife so often mentioned, *Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.*

AND thus having gone through the several branches of that assistance the wife owes to her husband, in order to make her an useful and agreeable help meet for him, I now proceed to the last instance of duty she owes her husband, to wit, obedience.

MAN and woman were at first created perfectly equal. For altho' there are some passages in *St. Paul's* epistles, which imply a superior dignity in the man, yet are there none, that infer a superior authority, or right of dominion, on his part, before the fall. And indeed, when *Adam* and *Eve* were yet in their innocence; when their understandings were clear, and their wills upright; when their interest and inclinations were in all respects the same, and pride and vanity had introduced no competition of superiority between them, there was not the least need of giving either of them power and authority over the other; because the greatest pleasure either of them could be capable of, in that condition, was to do every thing that they

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knew would be most acceptable to the other; and, consequently, there was no need of power, or command, or force, to oblige either of them to do, what either of them desired. But when the woman sinned, thro' a vain desire of knowlege, and possibly from a vain hope of being superior to her husband, in the only point that gave him pre-eminence over her, it pleased God to punish that vanity in a disappointment of the very end it aimed at, and to make that very desire of pre-eminence a reason of subjection; decreeing, that from thenceforward her desires should be referred to the will and pleasure of her husband, either to reject, or comply with them, as he thought fit. As you may read, *Gen. iii. 16. And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

AND indeed the same desire of pre-eminence is, for the most part, the cause of their subjection to this day. There are few women of tolerable discretion, that might not intirely preside in their families, or at least be perfectly at ease, under the government of their husbands, if they did not too apparently affect to rule. And this, as it is exceedingly imprudent, and the occasion of almost all the
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disquiets that distract the married state; so is it, in truth, immoral and irreligious; since they are expressly commanded in the Scriptures, to submit and be obedient to their husbands; as you may read, *Eph. v. 22, &c. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church, and he is the saviour of the body.* That is, as CHRIST and the Church make one mystical body, of which CHRIST is the head, so man and wife make one body, of which the man is the head; and as CHRIST is the Saviour of the Church, so likewise is the husband given to the wife, to be a saviour to her; to maintain and protect and defend her, and by his superior prudence to provide for her well-being, and to conduct her in every instance of discretion and duty. But then, as the head hath no interest of its own distinct from the rest of the body, nor any advantage over the other parts, unless the care of directing and providing for them be deemed an advantage, so hath the husband no true interest separate from the wife, nor any advantage from his superiority, but the care and trouble that attends

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it. And therefore neither hath he any reason to pride himself upon his power, nor she to repine for her subjection; since a condition of subjection to a wise and good government is, beyond all question, the happiest condition in life; and a lawless licentiousness would but put us into the power of every passion, and every folly, to hurry or seduce us to destruction. And I must insist upon it, that it is in the power of most women, by prudence, gentleness, and sweetness of temper, to make the authority of their husbands a source of ease and happiness to both.

FROM hence it follows, that, as the authority of the husband is a rational authority, devolved upon him by God, for the direction, and preservation, and well-being of the wife, it should never be exercised but with that view; and that, in an humane and rational manner: consequently, blind tyranny, and brutal force, should be banished the society of reasonable creatures, and is contradictory to the very nature and end of the marriage union. *So ought men to love their wives, saith St. Paul, Eph. v. as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself:*

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self: for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. Dominion was given to man, not for oppression and abuse, but for preservation and protection; on account of his superior wisdom and prudence: let these then be the reasons and measures of his rule; otherwise he defeats the ends of his dominion, and, at the same time, degrades himself from the dignity of his nature, and declares himself unworthy of the prerogative he is possessed of. And therefore St. Peter, 1 Ep. iii. directs the husband, *to dwell with the wife according to knowlege, giving honour to the wife, as unto the weaker vessel*; that is, making that superiority which God hath given you, a reason, not of insolence and abuse, but of humanity, and tenderness, and conjugal affection.

AND *Plutarch* very beautifully to this purpose tells us, that husbands ought to preside over their wives, not with the same despotic power, wherewith men dispose of their possessions, but with such a kindly sway, as the soul rules the body; sympathizing, and, as it were, growing into one with it; united by all the ties of tenderness and affection.

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fection. And since the dominion of the man seems to have been originally founded by the divine appointment, in his superiority of wisdom, if his heart be set upon supporting his authority, his first care should be, to support that superiority of wisdom, upon which it is best founded. Wisdom is a natural claim to dominion, and where-ever that is, authority and rule will wait upon it, especially when kindness and good-nature are added to it; for then it is irresistible: nay, in truth, kindness is oftentimes, in itself, more powerful to the attainment of all our desires, than the utmost stretch of power can be. And this is finely illustrated in the fable of the sun and the north wind*.

THE fable is well known, and the moral of it obvious; and I would earnestly recommend it to all married men and women, to

* A contest arose between these two powers, which of them should soonest oblige a countryman to throw off his loose coat: *Boreas* began, and, storming with all his force, tumbled and tost the coat about the poor man's ears, but to no purpose, for the stronger he blew, the stronger the clown held, and the closer he wrapt his coat about him. When the wind was weary, the sun began, and played his chearful beams upon him so successfully, that he soon melted him down into a kindly warmth, that made his coat not only useless, but troublesome to him; and so he quickly threw it off.

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remember, that when storming and raging are ineffectual to gain their ends, kindness and good-nature will seldom or ever fail of success.

AND thus I have gone through the several duties of the married state.

THE duties on the man's part, I told you, were love, fidelity, and support; but, above all, fidelity, forasmuch as infidelity, for the most part, destroys the other two duties, and is the common cause of poverty, as well as contention and hatred. And therefore it is, that Solomon (*Prov. v.*) advises to remove far from the strange woman, lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the house of a stranger; and thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed; and say, *How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ears to him that instructed me!* And soon after he adds, *Drink waters out of thine own cistern; let thy fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of thy youth; let her be as the loving hind, and pleasant roe; let her breast satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravished always with her*

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love. And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings; his own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be loaden with the cords of his own sins. Remember the Apostle's admonition. Remember, that as the wife hath no power over her own body, but the husband, so likewise the husband hath no power over his own body, but the wife. Nay, although your wives had not any power over your bodies, yet would you have no right to abuse and prostitute them to the purposes of vice. What, know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Christ? Will ye then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What, know ye not, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which you have of God, and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price? Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

ON the other hand, let the woman always remember, not only to be faithful to
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her husband, but agreeable, and observant; not querulous, not contentious; diligent in the care of her family, and the education of her children in the nurture and fear of the LORD; for this is the woman's justest and highest praise, both in the sight of God and man; *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, and putting on gorgeous apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price:* Despising the shewy outside of things, the paltry, the perishing vanities of this world, and being cloathed upon, in their stead, with the silent, the lasting, the invaluable ornament of modesty, and humility, and piety, which are of eternal excellency! ornaments of irresistible charms, even in the eyes of men, as well as inestimable value in the sight of God.

AND now, my brethren, if ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them. And surely ye would do them, if ye knew your own happiness. Brethren, how good and joyful a thing it is to dwell together in
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unity! to dwell together in an intire union of affection and interest; and in a perfect harmony both of heart and soul! forbearing one another in love, and keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, well knowing, that ye are tied down to an intire and perfect union, by all the natural engagements, and by all the moral and christian bonds, that can be imagined. And as your temporal interests are one, so also are your eternal. As ye are one body, so likewise are ye of one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ye have one LORD, one faith, one baptism, one GOD and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

To whom, in the union of the glorious and ever-blessed TRINITY, be all majesty, and power, and praise, for evermore.

SERMON

S E R M O N IV.

PROV. xxii. 6.

Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.

ALL the wise men in the world agree, that the first impressions made upon us, in our tender years, sink the deepest, and last the longest. And therefore *Solomon* well directeth, that children should be carefully taught, as soon as they are capable of instruction, all those principles and duties which we would desire to have them practise throughout the whole course of their lives. If good precepts and principles are early impressed, and fixed, they will be so many lights set up in the minds of children, to direct their conduct through this maze of life; to guide them in the ways of virtue and truth, and in the paths that lead to everlasting happiness. And although the giddiness of youth,
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and the blind impulse of unruly passions, should sometimes drive them out of their course; yet as soon as this tumult and infatuation is over, and the mind calmed to the dictates of reason, they will again return into *the way they should go; and when they are old, they will not depart from it.*

From these words, thus explained, I shall make it the business of this, and some following discourses, to lay down the duty of parents to their children, in all its parts: and this I shall endeavour to do, in the illustration and proof of the following propositions.

First, Parents are to take care of the health and constitution of their children.

Secondly, They are to give them good instruction.

Thirdly, They are to correct them in their faults.

Fourthly, They are to shew them good examples.

Fifthly, They are to make a proper provision for them, as far as they are able.

And, lastly, They are to pray to God for them.

First,

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First, Parents are to take care of the health and constitution of their children.

And this care should begin earlier, and extend further, than is commonly imagined.

It is a constant care in the culture of trees, to have a strict regard to the goodness and health of the stock you plant from; because such as the stock is, such will the cyon be; and the prudent husbandman exerts the same care, in relation to all the creatures, whose increase he is concerned in; and would count it strange stupidity, to breed from beasts, that were either diseased, or vicious—And with great reason; because such as the sire or dam is, such, in all probability, will the issue be. And, if men be so much, and so justly, concerned for the fruits of their trees, and the offspring of their brutes; can it be a question, whether they should be much more concerned for their own? Especially as it is of far worse consequence, to bring a vicious man into the world, than a bad apple, or a vicious horse. And therefore all persons that intend to marry, should take particular care, both of their body and their mind, to form both in such a manner, as that neither should be a source of evil to the world; they

they should, above all things, take care not to become the founders of a vicious and an infected race. For this reason they are to take care to strengthen their bodies by temperance and exercise; and to abstain from all excess in eating and drinking, by which their health and strength may be impaired. And, above all, they are carefully to abstain from that vice, so common and so fatal to youth, for whose punishment GOD Almighty hath, in signal judgment, appointed so severe and dreadful a distemper: a distemper, of such distinguished malignity, and inveterate infection, that it descendeth to late posterity; and is one of the chief, among those remarkable methods, by which *GOD visiteth the sins of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation.*

And as the body is to be disciplined to health and strength by temperance and exercise, so likewise should the mind be disciplined to knowledge and religion, by proper information and instruction; and, by the practice of every virtue. Good habits should be acquired, and vicious habits removed and rooted up, with all possible diligence, before men become parents; that they may not derive

rive the guilt upon themselves, of having filled the world with a race of fiends and monsters; nor the curse upon their posterity, of having evil constitutions, and evil habits, conveyed to them with their very being: such habits, as may make them very miserable in this world, and lead them to everlasting misery in the world to come; forasmuch as it is well known, that the dispositions of the mind, like the features of the body, are conveyed down from father to son, and, as the common observation is, *run in the blood*: and therefore the first duty that parents owe their children, is, to convey health, and strength, and a good constitution of body and mind to them, as far as it is in their power so to do, by a proper care of their own health, and a conscientious abstinence from all excess and vice of every kind.

And when that is done, the next care they owe their children, is to provide for their health and strength, by proper nourishment.

The parents are not to think they have done enough, in bringing their children into the world in as good a condition as they could. That, although not the least, is however but the first part of their duty. The
next

next is, to support the good constitution they have brought into the world, by proper nourishment, and care of their health. And, to this purpose, GOD Almighty hath impress'd a strong instinct of love and tenderness for their young, upon all the creatures. And this love is attended with so much delight and complacency in the tender offspring, as is a natural relief and compensation for all the trouble of education, and even for the pains of travail : agreeable to our blessed Saviour's observation, xvi. chap. of St. *John*, 21. ver. *A woman when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembreth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.*—And that women may have wherewithal to cherish this joy in their hearts, and to support these tender objects of their love with delight, GOD Almighty hath furnished them with breasts, filled with the most proper food in the world, for the nourishment of their young; and hath annexed a very uncommon degree of pleasure to the administration of it; and as uncommon a degree of pain and danger, to the withholding of it from the
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poor infant: so that this is as plainly a law of nature, to all mothers, to suckle their own children, as it is possible to conceive any law to be; attended with immediate rewards and punishments, as it is obeyed, or transgressed.

As to the rewards that attend the observance of this law of nature, possibly few women that hear me, know any thing of that matter; as having never tried the natural pleasure there is in administering the breast to their own helpless infants; unless, perhaps, their physicians might, at some time or other, have prescribed it to them for a cure, or recovery. But as to the punishment that attends the with-holding of that nourishment from their issue, I do not doubt but that most mothers that hear me, may be sufficiently acquainted with it: since it is well known, that repelling the milk by art, always occasions fevers, and a variety of other dangerous disorders, which often end in the death, and always in the danger, of the unnatural mothers; and not unfrequently make their lives miserable. And all these evils they endure, to avoid the discharge of a delightful duty, which they owe to God, and

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to their own flesh and blood; and to which they are urged, by an innocent and exquisite natural delight; and by one of the strongest natural instincts in the world: so that we may apply to the women of our age that bitter complaint of *Jeremiah*, in the 4th ch. of his *Lament.* ver. 3. *Even the sea-monsters draw out their breast, they give suck to their young ones*: the daughter of my people is become cruel like the ostriches in the wilderness.*

This is one of the effects of that false politeness, which hath undone the world. How much better would it become us to imitate the simpler manners of those seemingly rude nations, where all women think themselves indispensably obliged to this duty†, from the highest to the lowest, and think themselves sufficiently authorized in doing so, from the example of the brute world, around them! It is true, this duty, as it is attended with much pleasure, so it is also attended with a good deal of care and trouble: but then it is so chiefly to the poor, who are forced

* This is particularly applied to the lamenting, by *Leguat*, p. 69.

† *Sympson* tells us, in his *Voyage to the East-Indies*, that in the *Moluques* mothers suckle their own children; and dare do no otherwise, not even the queen; alleging the example of beasts, p. 141.

to undergo it all themselves; and yet these are almost the only people that discharge it; and even these own, that the pleasure of it greatly exceeds the pain: and it is plain it must be so, both from the goodness of God, and the preservation of the creatures, which must otherwise perish. And this is clearly evidenced from the joy and complacence expressed by the poorest creatures, in the performance of it. And the reason of this is evident: the breast is one of the most nervous and delicate textures of our frame; and wonderfully fitted by the Author of our being, for those fine sensations, which the soft and tender infant-organs are as well fitted to produce; the natural consequence of which is, love, joy, and complacence in the instrument of that innocent happiness; and love makes toil not only tolerable, but delightful: and, if women of better condition would but once suffer themselves to be governed in this point by the dictates of their duty, I am satisfied, that to them it would be doubly delightful; inasmuch as they could easily be relieved by the assistance of servants, from every thing offensive and vexatious in that parental office: and then, no-

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thing would remain in the discharge of it, besides the natural pleasure that attends it; and this, without any regard to the joys of a good conscience, would be abundantly its own reward. Or, say it were not, where is there any duty in life, that is not attended with some uneasiness? And if that could excuse from the discharge of it, there would be no such thing as virtue in the world: merit and demerit, praise and dispraise, would be taken away from the earth; and then idleness and industry, courage and cowardice, would be reduced to one value; and temperance and chastity would be placed upon the same level with dissolution and drunkenness. And therefore if women have any regard to the discharge of duty, in a point of so great consequence, both to their own health and happiness, as well as to the health and happiness of their children, and the good of mankind, they are, in the ordinary course of things, indispensably obliged to nurse their own children, at their own breasts, if they are fitted so to do, and their health will allow it. And how much more rational and eligible is this, than to expose them (as is now the common practice) to the neglect
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and cruelty, to the vices and distempers, of mercenary women; who can have no regard to them, from any other tye but that of interest! And, forasmuch as they often find their account in the death of the infant, more than in its life and health, there is no question, but the prospect of those perquisites which attend a new nursing, often tempt them to many inhumane methods of getting rid of the incumbrance of one infant, to make way for another they expect more advantage from. And, on the other hand, if they find their account in the life of the present child, (as, God knows, their whole subsistence often depends upon it) then are they too much tempted, never to let him die; I mean, to impose another upon you, when he doth. And, by this means, the spurious issue of idlers and vagrants, the dregs of stews and brothels, are substituted in the place of your own legitimate offspring, and divide the inheritance with the brethren; or perhaps come single, and alone, into the enjoyment of all that fortune, which you have toiled out your lives to gain; it may be, to the loss of your

own souls. And, no question, but this is often the case, when the apparent children of good men, and good women, who have been well principled, and carefully educated, in the fear of God, betray such profligate, perverse, abandoned dispositions, as are no way to be accounted for, upon any natural principles, other than their being the secret issue of other parents, from whom they have derived the hidden seeds of so much villainy and corruption.

To all this may be added another motive of great importance to all mothers; the early engaging the tender affections of their issue in their favour; which is perhaps the best security of their duty. It is well known, that nursing hath a natural tendency, and (if either are not very abandoned) must, in some measure, create a mutual endearment between parents and their children, now too little seen in the world. Children are generally observed to retain an uncommon affection for such nurses as have treated them well, until they are laughed out of it: nor is it altogether without reason, that in some countries, the being nursed upon the

the same breast, is thought a natural foundation of relation *

AND thus much for the duty of Mothers, in providing for the health and strength of their children by proper nourishment. I now proceed to the duty of the Father; for neither is He exempt from his portion of the parental care, in this point, since it is equally his concern: and, therefore, as the immediate administration of nourishment is incumbent on the mother, it is the duty of the father to make a sufficient provision for her support in the administration of it; and, by all possible marks and methods of tenderness and good-nature, to relieve, and make her as happy as he can, in this most important article of the conjugal care. And this is no more than what instinct inspireth many of the inferior creatures to do. And, if naturalists rightly inform us, it is to this we chiefly owe all that harmony that fills our fields and our groves, at the approach of spring; God Almighty having so appointed it, that the toil of incubation should be relieved by sprightly

* Thus the *Siamites* call their nurses, mothers. *Kemper's Hist. of Japan*, p. 15. And both they and the *Irish* call those brothers and sisters who have sucked the same breasts.

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music; that, whilst the hen sits upon the eggs, she should be relieved, under that painful and tedious confinement, by the songs of her mate: and where the male is not endowed with a power of relieving her toil in this delightful manner, then we are assured, he divides it with her; and is frequently seen to force her from the nest, that he may succeed to his portion of the trouble.

AND, besides all this, where the care of incubation will not suffer the female to take her usual range in search of food, her mate takes care not only to provide it seasonably for her, but also to administer it in the tenderest manner (a). And, surely, what instinct inspireth the lower creatures to act, in a point so necessary to their preservation, reason, good-nature, and affection, should yet more strongly direct, in beings who boast of higher endowments, and superior excellence.

AND thus much for the duty of parents, in providing for the health and good constitution of their children.

(a) This I speak from certain knowlege, grounded upon long and frequent observation.

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S E R M O N V.

PROV. XXII. 6.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

THE next duty that parents owe their children, is, to give them good instruction.

THE care of the body, however important, is yet but a lower concern. It is true, as it is the instrument of the soul, care should be taken to make it as usefully subservient to it, in its operations, as is possible. And, forasmuch as this is not to be done without health, and a good habit, therefore we owe the same care to the body on these accounts, that a musician doth to his instrument; because, if that be neglected, if it be either broken or abused, or if the strings be of an undue tone or texture, it will never answer the ends of his art; but will often send forth a disagreeable discord, instead of a delightful harmony.----For this reason, the first
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and great care in life should be, to join a sound mind to a sound body; and to preserve both in their perfection.—Now, forasmuch as the mind is believed, by many wise men, to come into the world a perfect blank, free from all characters of good or evil, and capable of any; and, forasmuch as knowledge and virtue are its health and strength, therefore the first duty, in life, is to impress right notions, and good principles, upon it, in the beginning: And, for this reason, you are first to impress a strong awe of Almighty God upon the minds of your children; of that God, who made all things in heaven and in earth, by the word of his mouth; and can destroy them again at his pleasure: of that God, who knoweth the secrets of our hearts, *and seeth the thoughts afar off*: and there is not a motion in our minds that is hid from him; but he will punish all evil thoughts, as well as evil actions, with dreadful vengeance; and, on the contrary, will reward every act, and every intention of virtue, with excess of happiness! And when your children know all this, your next care is to teach them, as far as they are capable of learning, what virtue and goodness is:
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and, on the contrary, what those wicked actions are which will offend God, and provoke his wrath against us; and then inspire them, by all possible methods, with the love of the one, and abhorrence of the other. The virtues, which they are first to be taught, are, to love, and do all good offices to, all around them: to pity the miseries and misfortunes of all they see in affliction; and to be charitable to the poor. And all this most children are capable of learning, even before they can speak: whereas the contrary to this is the practice of most parents; or, at least, of those to whose care they commit their children. Wrath, revenge, and cruelty, are the first passions children are taught to exert: if they fall, the ground is to be beaten in revenge: if any one offend them, they are taught to stamp, and clench their fists, and roar out some expressions, even of inarticulate rage, against them: if birds, or other poor creatures, are brought to them, to divert them, they are to be abused and killed. And thus, instead of being early instructed in meekness and compassion, in humanity and good-nature, they are taught resentment, and wrath, and cruelty, in their very cradles.

Vices

Vices which, in all probability, the best instruction in the world will never be able to unteach them for the rest of their lives:— and so they become monsters of oppression and inhumanity to all they deal with.

The sentence of the *Areopagus*, one of the wisest assemblies of *Greece*, or of the world, is well worth our attention on this head: they condemned, and passed a severe sentence upon, a child, who diverted himself with putting out the eyes of quails; considering that action as a mark of a most detestable disposition, which, if it were suffered to grow up with impunity, would be pernicious to a great number of people.

The next virtue that children are to be taught, is *Veracity*; that is, to tell the truth upon all occasions: and this is a virtue in which they will be more easily instructed; because it is a virtue to which all children are naturally disposed; and from which most of them are warped with difficulty. And to confirm them in this disposition, they are to know, that this is a virtue which *God Almighty* hath a peculiar regard for; that he delighteth to be called *the God of truth*: that mercy and truth are his great attributes: that

that none *shall abide in his tabernacle, none shall dwell in his holy hill, but he that speaketh the truth from his heart.* On the other hand, they are to be taught the utmost dread and abhorrence of a lye: that *the devil is a lyar, and the author of it*; but that God Almighty hateth and detesteth it: that he hath declared, by the mouth of *Solomon*, that *lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord*; and that *he that speaketh lyes shall not escape*: and whereas most lyes are told to hide faults, every fault, that is confessed with ingenuity, and sorrow for having committed it, should be forgiven; but a lye should never be forgiven, but corrected with double chastisement; and for this plain reason, because it doubles every fault that is committed, by adding known falshood to it. This, I say, is what children *should* be taught; but the very contrary to this is too often what they *are* taught. They are threatened and flattered into falshood, as soon as they are capable of being guilty of it. And almost the first sentence a child learns, after he can speak, is a lying excuse for his nurse, or his servant. If he fall, or be hurt, by their negligence, he is to deny it to death.----

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If they have given him any food that makes him sick, he is to deny it stedfastly, altho' the lye should cost him his life. I believe there are few that hear me, who have not known several, and heard of many more, instances of children, who have lost their limbs, and been cripples all their life long, by this corruption of their attendants.---

But how many thousands have lost their lives in this manner, is impossible to say.---And, indeed, if they only lost their limbs and their lives, the evil would be, in some degree, tolerable; whereas this early habit of lying depraves the mind, beyond any other whatsoever; and betrays children into so much impudence and effrontery, as makes them hardened to every virtue, and obstinate in every vice: and of consequence must end, too often, in their eternal ruin.

To this we owe that stedfastness in falsehood, conspicuous in the characters of some men; men that allow themselves in the vilest and most villainous falsehoods, that can any way contribute to increase their gain, or hide their guilt; to mask and disguise their hypocrisy, and raise the reputation of their righteousness: and though they should be in-

stantly detected, and exposed even to numerous assemblies, this makes no change in their conduct; for the hypocrite's whole life is one continued lye: you may confute, but you can't confound him. They receive your correction with such a placid composure, with such a meekness and humility in hypocrisy, that you can scarce believe your senses to their disadvantage: How is it possible such meek, such disinterested, such sanctified men should be villains? And, indeed, it would be hard to account for it, were we not informed by the Spirit of God, that the great father of lyes can, upon occasion, transform himself into an angel of light.

Another duty, which children should be early taught, and which, perhaps, will be the best guardian of their veracity, and every other virtue, is an awful regard, and high veneration, for the Name and Honour of God: for this will establish a high sense of the divine power and majesty in the minds of children, when they understand that his name is not to be mentioned, but with awe and reverence.—And yet, God knows, the direct contrary to this is the practice of the world; and the very first words children are
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often taught to pronounce, is some profanation of the name of GOD, in a curse, or an oath.

The fear of the Lord (saith Solomon) is the beginning of wisdom: Children are influenced into duty by the impressions of fear, even before the use of reason; and, therefore, the fear of GOD should be inculcated as early, and as deeply, as possible; as the surest means to inspire them with caution and consideration, which are the sure foundations of wisdom and virtue; and the best guardians against error and impiety:----- whereas, when children have got early habits of profaning the name of GOD, they immediately lose all sense of fear towards him; and, with that, all sense of religion and virtue; and so become utterly profligate, and abandoned to all vice and villainy! insomuch that, I believe, there scarcely ever was one instance of any child, who was early allowed to curse and swear, that ever became a good man, to the last day of his life.

The next virtue, in which I would have children instructed, is, Humility. The virtue which, of all others, will best prepare them
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for all the cross accidents and calamities they are sure to meet with in life, will give them the truest sense of their own corruption, and weakness, and vanity; and of consequence, will dispose them to contentment and resignation, under all the dispensations and chastisements of the Divine Providence. And this is a virtue, which the modesty of their tender years will incline and enable them to practise with ease: whereas, in the common course of education, they are carefully initiated into the contrary vice, and are taught pride, with as much diligence, as if it were the most important duty in life: and, as if the delay of so excellent an institution, were of dangerous consequence, they take care to begin with it betimes, and instruct them in it, as soon as they are capable of discerning their own figure in the glass: and then is the imagination of the poor young creature bewildered, with all the gayeties that vanity can invent; laces, ribbons, feathers, fineries, and fopperies of all kinds and colours are crowded together, to adorn the tender clay; and the imagination of one, if not both parents, is stretched, to dispose and vary all these to advantage, that the poor little pa-

geant may, by all means, be early taught to set a right value upon its person; and to distinguish itself from other children, whose parents have less fortune or foppery than its own. — The consequence from all this is, that so fine a creature cannot bear to go into a cold dirty school, or mix with a herd of rattered children; and so is kept at home, for fear of spoiling its fine cloaths, or its fine complexion. — And by this means, its little head is in a very little time so intirely filled with such fine ideas of dress, and fashion, and vanity, that there is no room left for any thing good or useful ever after. If the child be of the other sex, it is odds, but she is committed, perhaps trusted intirely, to the care of an ignorant and phantastic servant, who, if she hath the good fortune to be born a foreigner, is, from that sole advantage, without the recommendation of any one useful talent in life, too often thought qualified to educate children of the highest condition; and will take special care, never to spoil the fine eyes of her pupil, either with work, or reading; never to molest her mind, either with the low troublesome knowlege of family affairs, or with the severities of religion

religion and virtue; will teach her to speak a foreign language with great ease and volubility, perhaps without knowing how to read her own—and, what is infinitely worse, will be too apt to unteach her the awkward unfashionable virtues of modesty and reserve; will let her understand, that blushing is the highest crime she can be guilty of; and that she ought to be ashamed of nothing, but being out of countenance, or out of fashion: in a word, will make her a complete, perhaps a perverted woman, before she knows what it is to be a child.

If the child happen to be of the male kind, it is odds, but a *French* tutor will do as much by him. I would here by no means be understood to mean any reflection upon that great nation, which hath produced so many men of eminence in every branch of useful knowledge—I censure nothing but our own folly, in too often choosing the meanest of that nation, for the most important office in life, the education of our children.—These are men who from their skill in outward ornaments are too often absurdly chosen, to infuse inward accomplishments; men who will carry their pupils, by a short

road, thro' coffee-houses, play-houses, and assemblies, into what they call, the knowledge of the world; without passing through the tedious round of old and obsolete books and languages, and the severe discipline of study; and without incumbering their fine heads with the lumber and pedantry of arts and sciences.—Such is that detestable education, by which many of the best fortunes and families amongst us are too early corrupted and cramped, to the reproach and calamity of their country! Men, well known, and sufficiently distinguished in all places of public resort; except the Church, the Senate, and the Courts of justice: for in the first of these, they are rarely seen, at least to any good purpose; and in the rest, as rarely heard. And altho' some, by the force of a better genius, and the influence of the Divine Grace, may break thro' the prejudices of so unhappy an education; yet these are but few, and rare, in comparison of the mighty numbers that are utterly undone by it.

Another virtue that should be early and carefully taught children, is Justice; and that equity and honesty in our dealings, which is prescribed by this virtue, is so very agreeable
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to the first rudiments of reason, that children are very early capable of it. And to give them a high veneration for this virtue (which is the shield of right, and the bond of peace), they are to be taught, that it is of high value in the sight of God; that *justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne*; and that he hath in his holy word promised great and lasting blessings upon those that practise this virtue from the heart:—that *God bleisseth the habitation of the just*; that they are under his immediate care and protection: that he hath promised, that no evil shall happen unto them; and that he will deliver *them from trouble*.

On the other hand, they are to be inspired with the utmost detestation and abhorrence of all fraud and iniquity in their dealings—They are to be taught, that every degree of these vices are marks of the meanest and basest minds; that there is as much villainy in defrauding a school-fellow of a taw, or a trifle, as in robbing him of any thing of greater value—for if a child be allowed to do injustice in a trifle, he will be much more tempted to it when he can gain considerably by it. And therefore he is to be taught,

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that this is a vice which will render him despicable, as well as hateful, in the eyes of the world; and doubly odious in the sight of GOD—that *false weights and false measures are an abomination to him*—that *if any man defraud his brother, GOD hath declared himself an avenger of all such*—that he hath declared, that neither *thieves, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*. Your children are to be early and carefully taught, that nothing under heaven can justify any degree of fraud or iniquity in our dealings; that no pretence, even of good intentions, or pious purposes whatsoever, can sanctify wicked means; that we must by no means *do evil, that good may come*; and that the Spirit of GOD hath expressly declared of all that do so, by the mouth of his holy apostle, that their *damnation is just*: that GOD himself hath declared by the mouth of his prophet *Isaiah* (lxi. 8.) *that he hateth robbery, though it were for a burnt-offering*. And above all, they should be carefully taught, that of all robberies, they are the most heinous, the most hateful, the most abhorred of GOD, who have the spoils of the widow and the orphan for their object; the
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helpless orphan; the sickly, the aged, the desolated widow. O Lord, righteous and just, how just are thy judgments, which thou hast pronounced against their oppressors in thy holy writ! *Oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, nor the poor, saith Zechariah* (vii. 10.). And he observeth of all that do so, that they made their hearts as an adamant-stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the prophets—Therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts—therefore it came to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts. *Wo to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled* (saith Isaiah, xxxiii. 1.) *and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee. Rob not the poor* (saith Solomon, in the xxii^d ch. of his Proverbs, *Rob not the poor*) *because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.*

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GOD, of his infinite mercy, deliver this audience from this guilt, and from the vengeance due to it; through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST.

S E R M O N VI.

PROV. xxii. 6.

Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.

IN a former discourse upon these words, I proposed to consider the Duty of Parents to their Children in the following order:

First, That parents are obliged to take care of the health and constitution of their children.

Secondly, That they are to give them good instruction.

Thirdly, That they are to correct them in their faults.

Fourthly, That they are to shew them good example.

Fifthly, They are to make a proper provision for them, as far as they are able.

And, lastly, They are to pray to God for them.

Under

Under the first of these heads, I shew'd it to be the previous duty of all persons that entered into the married state, to take care, that their constitutions were not impaired by intemperance, or excess, or vice of any kind; nor their minds infected with evil habits, inasmuch as evil dispositions are found by experience, to be propagated as well as evil constitutions: and altho' it be a reflection of sufficient dread and disquiet, to be the author of a miserable infected race of wretched mortals; yet it is infinitely more so, deliberately to diffuse vice and villainy among mankind, and entail them upon late posterity, to be the founder of a race of fiends.

In the next place, I shew'd it to be the indispensable duty of mothers to nurse their own children, if their health and constitution will allow it: that this is indisputably a law of nature; and, as such, guarded with evident and sufficient sanctions; the observance of it attended with the reward of signal pleasure and happiness to the parent; and the transgression of it, with dangers and punishments of various kinds.

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The next duty of parents which I considered in my last discourse, was that of giving their children good instructions : and the first part of this duty, I told you, was to give them early and strong impressions, of the awe and veneration of that great Being, that made heaven and earth; that *searcheth the secrets of the heart, and seeth the thoughts afar off*—the Almighty Author of sure and unerring vengeance to the wicked, and infinite and unspeakable rewards to the righteous; and then, gradually to explain and inculcate the several virtues, that will intitle them to his favour, and inspire the utmost abhorrence of those vices, that will draw down his vengeance upon them.

The chief of these virtues, I told you, were Mercy, Humility, Truth, and Justice; which are the nobler and more immediate transcripts of his own perfections, the great guardians of *peace upon earth, and goodwill towards men*: and under some of these heads, I shewed you the pernicious practice of parents and servants, in early initiating, and carefully instructing children in many of the contrary vices, Wrath, Rvenge, Cruelty, Pride,

Pride, Lying, and profaning the Name of God, in unhallowed oaths and curses.

I concluded with an earnest exhortation to parents, early and carefully to instruct and exercise their children in the principles and in the practice of justice; which is the shield of right, and the bond of peace: to teach them that nothing under heaven can justify any fraud or iniquity, in our dealings; that no pretence of good intentions or pious purposes whatsoever, can sanctify wicked means.

Having thus considered the principal virtues, in which children are early to be instructed, I now proceed to consider those, which may, I think, be properly called, secondary or ministerial virtues; as being subservient to virtues of greater consequence, and higher excellence than themselves: and the chief of these are, Temperance, Obedience, Modesty, Civility, and Industry. As to the first of these, I am well aware, that Temperance is, and hath ever been accounted a cardinal virtue; nor is it any part of my intention to debase its dignity; but only to observe, that as it is subservient to higher purposes, than bare abstinence from excess;
and

and is indeed necessary to the exercise of every other virtue; therefore I think, it may not improperly be termed ministerial: and it is certain, that wise men have ever esteemed Temperance so necessary both to health and virtue, that some have gone so far, as to injoin it strictly to the breeding parent; that so the child may come into the world, in some measure, influenced by this habit; or, at least, properly prepared for it. All physicians agree, that the plainest and simplest foods are best fitted to young and tender stomachs, and are attended with less danger of surfeit and excess; and of consequence are more safe and salutary: and all philosophers agree, that Temperance is the truest foundation of every virtue, and good habit in the mind. And if so, it is evident to common sense, that this foundation cannot be laid too early: and therefore parents cannot be too careful in avoiding all sweetenings and seasonings, all heightenings of taste, in their childrens food; which cannot fail of having ill effects upon their health, and giving them an early turn to luxury, the inlet of every vice, and every corruption, to which the human nature is prone! — Luxu-
ry,

ry, our national reproach and ruin! to which we owe, among infinite other evils, the immeasurable use of that too fashionable and pernicious plant, which weakens the stomach, unbraces the nerves, and drains the very vitals of our national wealth; to which nevertheless our children are as early, and as carefully enured, from the very breast, as if the daily use of this liquor were an indispensable duty which they owed to God and their country.

The next ministerial virtue which children should be early taught, is Obedience; and it is sufficiently known, that this is always the first duty inculcated by that order of men, which hath hitherto been most eminent for the education of youth. *Children, obey your parents in all things, saith the Apostle; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.* And, doubtless, nothing can be more agreeable to the God of order, and Fountain of all virtue and all felicity, than this submission of children to their natural superiors and guardians; which is the best early guardian of their health, the best security of their virtue, and source of their happiness; it being evident, that in the ordinary course of things, nothing
can

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can be more reasonable, or of greater use to children, than a ready undisputing submission to the will of their parents; they being from the advantage of more age and experience, better judges of what they ought to do or avoid. And therefore this obedience should have no limitation or reserve, except where the parent is found to command something contrary to the law of God: in that case, and in that only, the child's obedience is to be dispensed with; in all others, to be steadily and uniformly exacted, without admitting the least debate or hesitation; than which nothing can be of worse consequence, either to the peace of the parent, or the virtue and well-being of the child: the same spirit that is restive to the authority of the parent, will in time be refractory to that of the magistrate, and rebellious even to that of Almighty God; and will at the same time, in all probability, degenerate into an offensive rudeness, or an unsociable fullness to the rest of the world. And therefore parents should subdue this spirit early and effectually, if they expect their children should become good sons, good subjects, or good christians. And the true way to do this is, by carefully
avoiding

avoiding all cruel, unjust, and wicked commands, and exacting a severe and steady obedience in all others. And these, in a prudent and good parent, must often be such as will shew the child his own interest and happiness, in the obedience he yielded to them; although neither of these, neither his interest nor his happiness, should ever by any means be made the rules or measures of his obedience (because there are infinite instances, in which it is impossible he can either discern or judge of them): no, this must be intirely resolved into the parents right of rule; the natural pleasure of a dutiful submission to their authority; and the comfortable assurance of a blessing from Almighty God, upon their chearful and conscientious obedience.*

Another virtue that parents are carefully to cultivate in their children, is Modesty. By Modesty I mean, not that outward demureness and artifice of face; that affected guise and phrase of humility, which impudence often assumes, and hypocrisy always: the mask of fraud, and harbinger of deceit; that

* On the slave-coast of *Guiney*, children give and receive nothing from their parents, or elder brothers; nor wives from their husbands, but upon the knee. *Bosman*, F. 341.

meek unblushing assurance, which distinguishes the smooth and faintly *Pharisee*, that smooths his phrase, and humbles his eyes, with all the arts, and to all the purposes of delusion; of whom the Psalmist so justly observes, that *there is no faithfulness in his mouth; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.* No; true modesty arises from a true sense of decency and duty, and best shews itself in a becomingness of behaviour, and due deference to the rest of the world, according to their several relations and stations in it; equally removed from fawning and from falsehood: and of this we need say little more, than that it is at once the greatest ornament of youth, and best guardian of virtue. It is that natural cheque, which it hath pleased God to lay upon every thing, that is either vicious, or unruly, or even indecent, in our nature. And of how much value this virtue is in the eyes of Almighty God, is evident from the care which he hath taken of it in the very formation of our frame. The flushing of the blood in the face, upon the consciousness of having violated this virtue; or even upon the least apprehension of being in danger of violating

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it, is one of the most amazing phenomena among all the wonders of our make: for what is this, in effect, but God Almighty's declaring to us, that we shall never offend against this virtue, without publishing our shame to all around us? what is it, but making every drop of blood in our bodies, the guardians of it? and this, in a manner, equally astonishing and inexplicable; flashing the blood into the face, by chanel's that never were found out; and by a power that never was, or will be, accounted for: and the plain reason why this virtue is so guarded, is of such mighty importance in the sight of God, is this: It is the guardian of every virtue; it is in the mechanism of our frame, what prudence is in our minds; the power that sways, and guides, and governs, all the other virtues. Take away prudence from the mind, and there is no virtue left: take away modesty from our make, and the consequence will, in effect, be the same: this once removed, the mind becomes the easy prey of every passion, every vice, and every evil tendency in our nature — This once removed, every spark of evil, before latent in the soul, blazes out into a flame, and de-

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yours all worth and virtue before it: and therefore there is not a more lovely, or more important, office of the parental care, than to be strict and diligent guardians of the modesty of their children; than to keep them at the utmost distance from every thing, that hath the least appearance, even of indecency, and much more of impudence, impiety, or immorality of any kind. And yet the very contrary to this is too notoriously the practice of many parents; who take a monstrous, or to speak more properly, a hellish pleasure, in teaching their children the worst words, and most vicious and impudent forms of speech, as soon as they are able to speak—*Folly* (saith Solomon) *is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom*: and is it possible there can be a greater excess of folly, than for parents thus to delight in the destruction of their own children? This is so shocking a conduct, that it is incapable of aggravation; and therefore I shall only observe of it, that these men act as if they were afraid their childrens own natural inclinations, their parents example, and the corruptions of the world, would all come too late to make them reprobates! to make them ripe for perdition! And therefore

they take early pains to establish their guilt, and to insure their damnation betimes.

Another duty parents owe their children is, to teach them that Civility, which is commonly known by the name of Good-manners---An accomplishment which introduces youth more early, and to more advantage, into the world, than any other whatsoever; and oftentimes recommends them more effectually to the favour and protection of the great, than many other qualities of more inherent excellence; because it is often the only one, by which they can be obliged or served. In one word, it is an easy, a natural, and an universal introduction to the regard of mankind; and, if it be supported by real worth, cannot fail to fix us in their esteem.

And this civility, which we call good manners, is a duty founded at once, both in justice and necessity.

No man is self-sufficient, but hath frequent and endless occasions, for the assistance and good offices of others: and no man is so strictly tied down by any law either of God, or society, to do good offices to others to the full extent of his power, but that he
hath

hath at the same time a right to some returns of gratitude and acknowledgement. And in this conduct, in requesting the favours and good offices of others, with a becoming deference; in a readiness and chearfulness to do good offices to others, with a thankfulness for being so employed; and, lastly, in a thankful and ready acknowledgement of all good offices done to ourselves; in these consist the essentials of civility, and what we truly and properly call good manners: The courtly phrase, the courtesy, and the bow, and the friendly salutation, are but its outward garb, indication, and ornament. Let me be understood upon this point, which is, in truth, very little understood in the world. Altho' every man hath a right, from our natural equality, to a fair unoffending treatment from every other; yet no man hath an absolute right to the aid of others in any exigency; and therefore, when he wants it, he is obliged to sue for it, in a modest phrase, and submissive demeanour; and when he hath received it, he is to return thanks, in a style suitable to the favour received: and, therefore, the man that is void of good manners, is at the same time void

both of gratitude and justice: he expects what he hath not a right to; and he pays not what he owes. So that ill manners is in truth a lower kind of immorality; it is injustice, and dishonesty, in a less degree; and, if it be neglected there, may soon rise, and become conspicuous in a higher.

Another virtue in which children are to be carefully instructed, and to which they are to be early enured, is Patience (which I shall beg leave to consider in this place as a ministerial virtue). Now patience is a virtue, which teaches us to bear evil with equanimity, and humble resignation to the will of God; by whom all events are governed, and without whom not so much as a *sparrow falleth to the earth*. Forasmuch then as it is well known, that all evils are increased by impatience, and abated by equanimity and resignation; therefore it is obvious at first sight, of what importance the value of patience must be, in a world encompassed with evil.

The instances under which this virtue is to be exercised, are endless, as the calamities of life; and therefore it cannot be too early, too often, or too earnestly inculcated. However,

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ever, I shall at present content myself with recommending one small part of it to the consideration of all parents and tutors : and that is, Patience of solitude ; early to habituate their children and pupils to bear being alone.

The advantages of this habit are obvious, and need barely to be mentioned. First, they will by this means learn to think, to reflect, and converse with their own thoughts and hearts. Secondly, they will soon get the better of those instinctive fears of solitude ; which, however wisely impressed, (in aid of that period of life, which most needs the protection and care of others) are too apt to degenerate into timorous superstitions ; which impair all the powers of reason, and often make life a load. And, thirdly, it will guard them from those infinite evils which men daily run into, to banish solitude, and kill time ; such as evil conversation, and idle pursuits, and habits of all kinds. And this, we are told, a wise man of antiquity laid so great a stress upon, that, being asked, What he had gained by his philosophy ? he answered, That he had learned to converse

at home, and not be beholden to others for good company.

Another duty in which children are early to be instructed and exercised, is, Industry in some honest and useful occupation. The children of poor parents in some rudiments or lower branch of some useful trade, as the foundation of a future livelihood; and the children of those of better condition, in endowing and adorning their minds with those habits of knowledge and virtue, which will best become their station and condition in the world; and make them a blessing to all below them.

“ The whole life (say the *Chinese* philosophers) depends upon care and industry;
 “ the year on the spring, the day on rising
 “ early. He who in his youth is not diligent
 “ and assiduous in his studies, when old age
 “ cometh, will be a fool, and find himself
 “ empty-handed: he who in spring will not
 “ till, in autumn will not reap*.”

Early industry is the best security in the world against vicious habits: when this is neglected, men easily become a prey to sloth

* *Churchill's Collect.* vol. i. p. 158.

and

and idleness; which are the parents of every vice, and the bane of every thing good and excellent.

And here I cannot but take notice of that noble institution of *Solon* that great *Athenian* law-giver; which decreed, that every child that refused or neglected to support his parents, when age or infirmities called for their assistance, should be branded with infamy, and deprived of all the privileges of society: but with this limitation; provided the parents took care to breed up their child to some useful trade or occupation; which if they neglected, their children were then acquitted of all obligation to provide for them in their need.

And thus I have done with that part of the Parents Duty, which consists in instructing their children, and forming them to those virtues which may be called the lesser morals, but are at the same time the sure guardians of the greater.

S E R M O N VII.

PROV. XXII. 6.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

HAVING, in some former discourses, laid before you the several parts of the Parents Duty to the Children, and explained very particularly the several virtues, both primary and ministerial, in which they were to be early instructed and exercised; I now proceed to consider the Means necessary to be made use of, in order more effectually to inculcate and confirm those virtues in their hearts.

And, first, All parents are particularly to remember, that as soon as their children have passed through the first rudiments of learning, and are able to read, they should then be carefully taught some short system of the christian religion, such as that excellent summary

many of christian duties, contained in the Church Catechism; not only to get them by heart, or rather by rote, as the common custom is, but in a rational intelligent way: and, in order to this, the questions and answers should be varied and explained, and the children should be obliged to give the meaning of them in other words; and, at last, to add the proofs from Scripture: and this they will be enabled to do, by the help of some short and useful explanation of the Catechism, published for that purpose; one particularly, by a late most reverend and excellent prelate, formerly your teacher in this place: but, above all, the Scriptures are to be read frequently and constantly; those parts especially and primarily, which contain an account of the wonderful works and judgments of God; such as the creation, the deluge, the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, and the deliverance from the *Egyptian* bondage: and, above all, the life and miracles of our Blessed Saviour, and his Apostles—For these being in their own nature extraordinary, and at the same time conveyed to us in the noblest, the most instructive, and the most delightful relations this world

world was ever blessed with, will be read with pleasure, and remembered with ease; and will at the same time give your children strong and awful notions of the infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God; together with a deep veneration of his Justice and Judgments upon presumptuous and impenitent sinners: and, in consequence of this, will impress a strong awe and dread of offending, and provoking the divine wrath and indignation against us.

After this, they are carefully to peruse and revolve those solemn and devotional parts of the holy Scriptures, which set forth, in most moving and exalted strains, the Mercy, and Might, and Majesty of Almighty God; such as the psalms of *David*, the prophecies of *Isaiah*, and the life, suffering, and submission of *Job*: and, lastly, they are to be well and often instructed and exercised in the *Ecclesiastes*, and Proverbs of *Solomon*, which contain at once the plainest and the wisest precepts that ever were delivered for the conduct of life, both with regard to this world, and the world to come. These are to be perpetually perused, and perfectly remembered: and, by being so, will be a sure
and

and lasting fund of direction, consolation, and support, on all occasions, and throughout all emergencies in life.

And thus I have gone through those fundamental duties of erudition and instruction, which parents owe their children—For the rest, this city hath the advantage of so many excellent schools for their further improvement, as makes it unnecessary to pursue this subject any longer—Only thus much give me leave to observe to you, that as good schoolmasters are the greatest benefactors to mankind, and the worst rewarded for the good they do, of all mortals, paying an uncommon regard and return to them, for the advantages your children receive from them, as it is your duty, so it is likewise greatly your interest; and the fruits of it will be repaid sevenfold into your own bosom.

I have now considered at large, how your children are to be led gradually, through the whole series of christian and moral duties; and have only to add, that, when they are early and long practised in them, the motions of duty and virtue will then become as easy and as familiar to them, as those of nature; or, to speak more properly, custom
will

will make them nature; and they will practise them with as little difficulty, as they walk or breathe.

The next duty that parents owe their children is, to correct them in their faults— And this is a duty wherein parents, from their great fondness for their children, are often exceedingly faulty: and yet, in truth, the neglect of correction is faulty, even upon the score of fondness; for true tenderness and love to children should oblige parents to provide early and carefully, that they might be miserable and afflicted as short, and as seldom, and happy as often, and as long, as possible. And the true way to effect this, is to fix good habits; and either to prevent, or to root out, evil habits as early as possible. For this reason, if children are not to be won to goodness by kindness and indulgence (which I own is much more desirable), they are to be compelled to it by severity and discipline; and when they have once got a good habit, it will from that moment be easy to them. On the other hand, if they are not to be kept back from evil by exhortation and advice, they are to be deterred from it by threats and punishments: for,

for, as Naturalists observe of young trees, that stubborn, crooked plants, are not to be streightned but by fire; so stubborn, perverse dispositions are often not to be amended but by warm and severe correction; and that from the very beginning. One correction, and that, perhaps, a light one, will deter a child from doing an ill thing at first; but, if you suffer him to get a habit of doing it, perhaps twenty corrections will not break him of it: so that children are to be early corrected, out of pity and tenderness. For what parent, that loves his child, would not rather correct him for a fault once, than let him go on until he found himself under a necessity of correcting him fifty times for it,* and perhaps to no purpose? And therefore *Solomon* rightly observes in the xiii. ch. of his *Proverbs*, at the 24th verse, *That he that spareth the rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.* From hence we learn, that parents should correct their children early, even out of love and pity to them. And the same wise man again adviseth, xix. *Prov.* ver. 18. *Chasten*

* *Confucius* the great *Chinese* philosopher tells us, that it is cruelty in parents, not to instruct and punish.

thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying. That is, chasten him early, while there is hope of his reformation; for if you let him go on in vice, your correction may come too late. Again he tells us, xxix. *Prov. ver. 15. The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself, bringeth his mother to shame.* The mother is here particularly mentioned, because children are mostly ruined, by the false and ill-judged indulgence of the mothers: nay, you ought to correct your children early, as well for your own ease, as for their amendment: for besides the pleasure of seeing your children grow up in goodness and virtue; is it not a great happiness to yourselves, to be saved the trouble, and vexation, and disquiet, of giving your children frequent and repeated corrections, when they are grown headstrong in vice? And therefore *Solomon* again most excellently adviseth in ver. 17. of the same chapter, *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest: yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.*

But, perhaps, the child is weak and sickly, and therefore must not be corrected, for fear of spoiling his constitution. This is the

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common excuse for ruining all the children in the world: ath it is as shameful and ill grounded, as it is common: for the sure way of destroying the best constitution under heaven, is by leaving it at the mercy of peevish and ungovernable dispositions, by making it a prey to all the unruly passions, and humours, and appetites of a perverse mind; and therefore the only way to preserve a weak constitution, is by subduing the froward unruly mind, that tears it to pieces, to the discipline of reason and virtue. Moreover, it should be considered, that if this be not seasonably and effectually done, the diseases and ailments of headstrong children can neither have the aid of proper food or proper physick to relieve them: and therefore all necessary correction is to be early applied, even for the interest of their health and quiet: although in truth, if correction were dangerous to such a constitution, it were infinitely better, that a perverse child should actually die under it, than that he should be suffered to become a son of perdition; to grow up into a monster of vice and iniquity, to plague his parents and the world, and to gather to himself *wrath*
5 *against*

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against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

The next duty that parents owe their children, is to set them good Example; of which I shall now say no more than this, that your children will always believe, that you think that to be the best which you practise yourselves; because you do it of choice: and if you did not think it best, why should you do it? and therefore, as it will be cruel in you, to correct them for those vices which you yourselves not only teach, but tempt them to by your example; so it will be vain, and impossible for you to reform them by it. For this reason, if you have any regard for their well-being in this world, and their salvation in the next, you will be infinitely careful not to lead them in the paths of perdition, not to guide or go before them in the ways of sin, *which go down to the chambers of death.*

The next duty that parents owe their children, is to make a proper Provision for them, as far as they are able: and the Apostle tells us, in the v. ch. 1. Ep. to *Tim.* ver. 8. That *he is worse than an infidel*, that neglecteth

his duty.—And the reason of this declaration is evident; this is a duty which even the heathens thought themselves obliged to from the laws of nature: and therefore that christian that neglects it, is, in that respect, worse than a heathen.

Now by making provision for your children, must be understood such a provision, as may enable them, by the help of an honest industry, to become good and useful men in the world: for what can be a more lamentable consideration to parents, than to reflect, that by their idleness and extravagance, they have exposed their helpless issue to misery and contempt, and to all the temptations of poverty and want. But on the other hand, parents are by no means obliged to provide endlessly for their children, as many of them do: To heap up so much wealth, as may make it needless for their children, to be either virtuous or industrious, in order to get a comfortable livelihood, is surely a dangerous provision, and such as never can be a duty. And, certainly, much less are they obliged to provide such fortunes for them, as may tempt them to luxury and excess, to vanity
and

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and extravagance; because that is providing, not for their support, but for their ruin, both of body and soul.*

There is one thing I must recommend to parents, as a point of great importance, to their own, as well as to their childrens happiness; and that is, in regard to their settling them in the world, in marriage. Many unhappy marriages are laid to the charge of parents, and, I fear, with too much truth. A discreet parent thinks himself obliged to settle his child advantageously: but that is the point wherein they so often fail: for, by advantageously they generally understand, richly and honourably; whereas riches and high rank easily may, and often do, bring many miseries along with them. There ought to be a strict examination of the heart, on such occasions, whether they can appeal to the All-seeing eye, for the integrity of their intentions; and whether avarice or ambition may not be more the motives of their con-

* It is better to have a son taught (say the *Chinese* philosophers) than to leave him much gold.---They add; of all the pleasures of this life, the greatest is to read good books: of all necessary things, the most absolutely so, is to instruct children. See *Navarett's* account of *China*, in *Churchill's* Collect. vol. i. p. 153.

duſt, than a reaſonable proſpect of happineſs to their iſſue: for if any degree of theſe mix with their intentions, it will taint them before God; and naturally tends to the mutual miſery, both of the parent and of the child.

Many things ought to be carefully conſidered, before ſuch an union is compleated. And as perfect obedience is required of the children, parents ſhould be very cautious in their commands; and impoſe nothing upon them, (particularly in relation to marriage) but with a proper regard to their true intereſt and happineſs: which is not poſſible to be attained in the conjugal ſtate, without true worth and virtue in the aſſociate; which are not always the attendants of wealth and honour. And even where theſe excellencies are attended with thoſe temporal advantages, the parents choice is to be urged with the utmoſt tenderneſs and indulgence; in-aſmuch as there may be latent, and well grounded diſlikes, which (too often) children can neither conquer, nor explain.

When this is done, then, whatever may happen from the parents miſapprehenſion of things, they will have a clear conſcience,

ence, and no room to reproach themselves; nor can they justly be reproached.

There are some parents such tyrants, that all the world must condemn them. I don't speak to them; for I fear they are incorrigible, and I hope their number is small: but I address myself to those, who appear more reasonable. But although they act with less appearance of violence, may be as guilty; and by insinuations and artful address prevail over fearful and modest minds, and obtain a consent, when they have not courage or assurance enough to resist or contend on such an occasion. This has been the unhappy case of many a young woman; and is, in effect, as cruel a case as can be well imagined; inasmuch as it frequently turns the humble and dutiful disposition of children into their destruction.

The last duty that parents owe their children, is, To pray to God for them; forasmuch as without the assistance and protection of the Divine Providence, all your endeavours for the well-being of your children, will be ineffectual, and all your councils vain. You may inculcate the best precepts with the utmost care and diligence; but you

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will never do it to effect, without the assistance of the Divine Grace: *Paul may plant, and Apollos water; but it is GOD who giveth the increase.* You may take as much pains as you will, to establish your family: but remember always, that *except the Lord buildeth the house, their labour is in vain that build it.* Therefore you are to pray earnestly, humbly, and incessantly to Almighty GOD; to that GOD *who giveth wisdom to the simple*, that he would inform the understandings, *and direct the hearts of your children in the ways of his laws, and the works of his commandments:* that he would remove far from them vanity and lies: that he would *make them a clean heart, and renew a right Spirit within them:* that he would inspire them with charity and mercy, with truth and justice, with humility and meekness, with honesty, industry, and sincerity in all their dealings: *that your sons may grow up as the young plants, strong and upright, and fitted for the noblest works of the Architect:* and, *that your daughters may be as the polished corners of the temple,* at once both ornaments and supports to the Church of GOD:
that

that your children may grow up good Christians, good Wives, good Husbands, good Parents, good Friends : that after the example of their Blessed Lord and Redeemer, they may *grow up in wisdom*, as in years, *and in favour with God and man* : that they may go on from strength to strength, useful citizens to their Country, subjects to their Sovereign, and servants to their God ; guardians of religion and virtue of every kind to all around them ; until they are gradually fitted and finished into living temples of the Holy Ghost ; the present pillars and ornaments of the earth, and future inhabitants of heaven.

Which G O D of his infinite mercy grant,
through the merits and mediation of
JESUS CHRIST.

S E R M O N VIII.

EXOD. XX. 12.

*Honour thy father and thy mother,
that thy days may be long upon the
land which the Lord thy God giveth
thee.*

ALL the precepts of religion respect either our duty to God, to our Neighbour, or to Ourselves: that is, the duties we owe to God, as creatures of his Goodness, and dependants upon his Providence; the duties we owe to Mankind in the several relations of life; and the duties we owe to Ourselves, in order to make us answer the ends of our being, and enable us to discharge the duties we owe to God and to one another: consequently, the duties we owe to ourselves, are but secondary and subservient to those: and therefore our Blessed Saviour, being asked by the learned *Pharisee*, which was the great commandment in the law, he answered,

answered, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.—This is the first and great commandment: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. Now the law of GOD considers mankind as members of one great community; and therefore every member of this community is our Neighbour, that is, one to whom we owe all the duties of a social creature, all the offices of humanity. But, forasmuch as the duties of this general tye were not sufficient to answer all the engagements and ends of life; therefore it hath pleased GOD, to superadd to these, particular engagements and obligations, absolutely necessary to the order and well-being of society: And of these, the Duty of Children to Parents, hath justly obtained the first place: because all our other duties to mankind begin and are founded here. It is from a right deference to the authority and institutions of parents, that we learn to become good men, good neighbours, good friends, and good subjects, as well as good sons. In one word, it is here we ordinarily learn all the offices of a social and rational creature, in our whole commerce

commerce with mankind; and therefore it is, that God in his great wisdom, when he had prescribed the duties relating to himself, in the decalogue, immediately subjoins that which respects our parents, *Honour thy father and mother, &c.*

And this is agreeable to the very order of nature; forasmuch as parents are, next to God, the authors of our being. God indeed is properly our father, and earthly parents do but convey to us that being which God produces: but the consequence from this is, that although we owe more absolute and unlimited obedience to God, the Fountain of our existence; yet we are to honour our parents, as his substitutes upon earth.

But forasmuch as this duty is not founded barely upon our existence, but is deduced with more force and greater evidence, from the advantages of early support, and early institution, derived to us by the care and affection of our parents; therefore all those that are to us in the place of parents, and in that relation eminently contribute to our well-being, have the fullest and clearest claim to paternal honour. And such are, among others, *our teachers and spiritual pastors:*
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from your parents you derive your being; from these, your well-being. From God you derive your immortal soul, with all its excellent faculties; from these you derive, under God, all that cultivation and improvement in virtue and knowledge; which are the glory even of immortal spirits.

In the next place, your governors are to you in the place of parents, because they are the fathers of their country; and the well-being of the community hath the same dependance, upon their paternal care and vigilance, that particular houses have upon the prudence and affection of the masters of families. And indeed all government, as it is originally derived from paternal authority, is in truth no otherwise to be considered, than as an enlargement of that authority: so that magistrates succeeding into the place and office of parents, are to be regarded as publick fathers, on whom the power of life and death, originally vested in parents, is now devolved. And as this is agreeable to the Scripture account of the origin of nations in general, Divines have observed, that it seems to be more particularly evidenced in the common and successive name of the
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kings of the *Philistines*, *Abimelech*; which is a compound of two *Hebrew* words, *Abi-Melech*, my father the king; plainly shewing, that the title of King was only an appellation of honour, originally given to the father of the family.

Having thus shewn who they are to whom we are to pay honour and obedience, from the obligation of this precept, I proceed, in the next place, to explain the first branch of this duty enjoined in my text; namely, the Duty of Children to their Parents.

First then, we are to honour our natural parents, or those whom the providence of God, or the constitution of our country, have substituted into their place. And this we are to do in the following instances: First, In Reverence: Secondly, In Obedience; and, Thirdly, In a grateful Retribution of all the Benefits we have received from them.

First, I say, we are to honour our parents by reverencing them. Now, Reverence is an awful love, mix'd with a fear of offending, which arises from respect and duty; not such a slavish dread as drives from the presence of those in authority over us, but
such

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such a filial and affectionate awe, as fills us with veneration and esteem, and will engage us to attend to the monitions: and conform to the conduct of our parents, and, at the time, to abstain religiously from every thing that might give them the least trouble or disquiet. And this inward veneration is wont to shew itself both in our words and whole demeanor. First, in our Words — For these, as they flow from a mind tenderly and dutifully affected, will naturally carry with them all the indications of veneration and affection that sounds can express — and will, at the same time, be submissive, and few. Respect is a natural restraint upon us, which, from fear of giving offence, ties up the tongue from uttering any impropriety or indecency to our parents, even when we are obliged to reason and remonstrate against their conduct. Such is that earnest intercession of *Jonathan* to his father *Saul*, for the life of *David* his friend — *his friend that was as his own soul.* 1 Sam. ch. xix. *Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works to thee-ward have been very good.* Nay, we have an in-
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france of an undutiful son in the Gospel, who, although he did not obey the authority of his father, did not, however, dare to profess his disobedience, but, on the contrary, gave him good words, and a dutiful appellation, saying, *I go, Sir*, altho' he went not. And, certainly, the tribute of respectful language is the least that can be paid to those who have taught us to speak: and therefore the rude returns of wicked children to their parents is so detestable in the sight of God, that he hath in his law denounced a punishment against this crime, equal to that of blasphemy against himself.---*He that curseth his father or his mother, shall surely be put to death*, Exod. xxi. 17. And Prov. xx. 20. *He that curseth his father or mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.*

Again, the inward veneration due to parents is wont to shew itself in our whole demeanour.—The humility of the mind naturally expresses itself, as in modesty of speech, so likewise in lowliness and submission of gesture, bowing the head, and bending the knee, upon every proper occasion.

An extraordinary instance of this, is to be found in the demeanour of *Joseph* to his

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father, *Gen.* xlvi. 12. High exalted as he was in the court of the greatest monarch upon earth, he thought it no lessening to bend before his aged father, and pay him all the marks of submission and duty — nay, and he did this, at a time, when the text assures us, *Jacob's eyes were dim*, and could not see; and consequently, when he could not be upbraided by his father for want of due respect, and probably would not have been blamed by any other mortal: for who would have been so vain as to censure the conduct of one who was at that moment in the highest reputation for wisdom and prudence of all mortals then alive? Or, if their vanity could have carried them to censure his conduct, their fear of *Pharaoh's* first minister would certainly have obliged them to keep their thoughts to themselves. Yet, under all these circumstances of his father's blindness, his own exalted station, unrivaled wisdom, and uncontrouled power, *Joseph's* affectionate and dutiful heart would not suffer him to dispense with the least form of respect and veneration to his aged parent: for we read, that when he brought his sons from between his knees, to present them to his

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his father, *he bowed himself with his face to the earth.*—And surely there is not any one circumstance of his grandeur, that reflects half so much lustre upon his character, as this single instance of filial humiliation.—

When I consider him upon his knees to God, I regard him as a poor mortal, in the discharge of duty to his Creator, of adorable majesty and infinite height above him.—

When I behold him bowing down to *Pharaoh*, I consider him in the dutiful posture of a subject to his Prince, to whom he was indebted for the highest exaltation and honour.

But when I see him bending to the earth, before a poor, old, blind, decrepit father, I behold him with admiration and delight:

How doth that humiliation exalt him! A father, to whom he was so far from being indebted for a great fortune, or an honourable support, that, on the contrary, his father was obliged to him, as far as a father could be, upon both these accounts. He had no estate to settle, at least none worth *Joseph's* regard: nor had his son any inheritance to hope for from him, but his blessing; and that he thought he ought not to receive but in the lowest posture of humiliation and reverence.

—A demeanour, God knows, very distant from the principles and practice of the present age, who have no notion that any thing can be meant by a parent's blessing, but some mark of their bounty, or settlement of their fortune : and for this reason the best of parents are regarded as little better than an incumbrance upon the son's estate, and a bar to his happiness. And therefore it is no wonder, if they are treated with no more respect than is absolutely necessary to secure the inheritance ; I mean, so much of it, as the wisdom of their ancestors hath left unsettled : otherwise it is much to be feared, that rudeness and neglect would (and in fact they do) for the most part fill up the place of reverence.

And this want of duty to parents is the effect of another and much greater want, the want of good principles, the want of a right sense of religion, and knowledge of the Scriptures : for surely, if men were acquainted with the terrors of the Lord denounced against undutiful children, they could never allow themselves in the least instance of disobedience or disrespect to their parents.

The eye that mocketh at his father, faith
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Solomon, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it. And as this is often literally true in the calamitous end of abandoned children, whose carcases are, in the field of battle, whither their disobedience carried them, exposed to ravens, and vulturs, and other birds of prey; or else upon gallows and gibbets, to which their villanies have brought them; villainies committed in contempt of the monitions and exhortations of their parents; the same sad fate is also frequently fulfilled upon undutiful children, in a metaphorical sense, in the deplorable ruin, and actual loss of eyes, brought upon such wretches by other rooks and vermin; by creatures of much greater prey and surer destruction than the ravens of the valley and the young eagles put together.

I have often admired it, as a glorious instance of discipline in the *Jewish* commonwealth, that an undutiful child was to be stoned to death by the people; that so every one should be obliged to punish a crime which every one was obliged to abhor. But then it must be observed, that the parents had no right to bring the child before the

magistrate, in order to this public condemnation, before they had first privately chastised him: for that was the letter of the law, *Deut. xxi. 18. If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother; and when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them; then it was that he was to be brought before the magistrate, accused, condemned, and stoned to death: so that private chastisement was always to go before that public, that infamous, that dreadful execution.*

This, my brethren, was the appointment and law of God, to his own people the Jews; and was, without question, the wisest institution that ever obtained in any nation: as it is the noblest monument of that wisdom, and virtue, by which the *Chinese* think themselves distinguished above the rest of the world, at this day; the mighty veneration to parents enjoined by their laws, and the severe and exemplary punishment of undutifulness and disobedience. In *China*, if a father charges his son with any crime before a magistrate, there needs no other proof: he is immediately condemned. If a son should
presume

presume to mock a parent, or lay violent hands upon him, the whole country is alarmed, and the judgment reserved for the Emperor himself: the magistrates of the place are turned out; and all the neighbourhood threatened, as having given countenance to so infernal a temper; which must be supposed to have discovered itself upon other occasions; it is impossible, they think, it should have arrived to such a degree of villainy at once.---The criminal, in these cases, is sentenced to be cut into ten thousand pieces, and afterwards burnt; his houses and lands destroyed, and even the houses that stood near him; to remain as monuments of so detested a crime: or rather, that all remembrance of so abominable a villainy should be effaced from the earth.---Nor are even their Emperors, in all their height of power, exempted from the strictest discharge of duty and piety to their parents.

But, further---As we must honour our parents with all the marks of outward reverence; so likewise with all the real effects of sincere obedience---*Children, saith the Apostle, Coloss. iii. 20. obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the*

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Lord. And as this is founded in the law of God, it is also enjoined by the dictates of reason; forasmuch as parents are our natural superiors; and because they are better judges and directors of your conduct, from the advantage of more years and experience, than you can possibly be for yourselves. And although you should in time, from the benefit of a happier genius, or a better education, arrive to greater clearness of judgment and strength of reason than your parents; yet still, as long as you continue a part of their family, you are to pay them that obedience that is due to them as masters of their own household; and therefore are never to swerve from their commands, unless they should injoin something contrary to the commands of God: in that case (and in that alone) your disobedience must be excused from the prior obligation you owe to your Creator, whose commands no mortal can controul or dispense with: and even in this case, after you have made all the modest and dutiful remonstrances in your power, you are to obey passively; that is, you are patiently to submit to such chastisement as they shall think fit to inflict for your disobedience. For altho'
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they should chasten you after their own pleasure, as the Apostle intimates in the xiith ch, to the *Hebr.* yet are you *to give them reverence.* And, surely you ought, in common gratitude as well as justice, to bear with their infirmities, who have so often and so long borne with yours.

But there is one instance, wherein obedience to parents is of more importance to children, than any other in life; and yet where they too often fail to pay it; and that is in the article of Marriage: for, as long as children continue a part of their parents family, (which must be till they think fit to dispose otherwise of them) they are absolutely in their parents power, and have no more right to dispose of themselves, than they have to dispose of the parents fortune, or inheritance, or any of their goods: and therefore we find the parental authority of so great extent in the law of *Moses*, that the daughter who made a vow unknown to her father, was not allowed to ratify it without his consent; as you may read, *Num.* xxx.

But, the institutions of the antient *Romans* carried this point a great deal higher,
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and made children dependent upon the parental authority during their whole lives: nor could the highest honours or authority in the commonwealth exempt them from it. A father, in *Rome*, could call down his son from the *Rostrum*, in the midst of his harangue to the people, to punish him for any misdemeanour: he could command him in the same manner from the *Senate*, or from the head of his *Legions*. Nor did the People, the Fathers, or the Army dare to interpose in his defence: they considered the duty to parents as a prior obligation, which nothing subsequent could cancel. And doubtless this was one reason why the *Roman* marriages continued so long sacred and undisturbed; because they were never made, but with advice and deliberation of their parents. And indeed, the contrary conduct is an instance of disobedience, that commonly carries its own punishment with it; and it is to be hoped, there are few children to whose final account this sin will be placed, because I am persuaded there are few that have been guilty of it, who have not had reason to repent very sincerely of it, to the last day of their lives. And the reason of
this

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this is evident:---The persons that take the eyes of young people most, are such as are skilled in the courtly forms and fashions of the world; such as have laid themselves out to dress and dance, and acquire such superficial and shewy accomplishments, as are too often at the greatest distance in the world from modesty, and good-nature, and good sense; and above all, from solid principles of true Religion and Virtue, which are the true conjugal accomplishments.

Prudent parents well know, that the true conjugal attractions arise, not from outward ornament, but inward excellence. This is a law established in morality, and is in exact analogy to that great law established in nature, which teaches us, that the attractions of bodies are not in proportion to their surface, but their solid contents. Prudent parents well know, that such accomplishments as either arise from, or tend to establish worth, can alone render any pair happy in an union that must last for life. This, I say, all prudent parents very well know; and therefore are best fitted to make a right choice for their children; but still with this caution, that they do not offer violence to
their

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their inclinations, by forcing them to marry against their will. For the rest, it were infinitely better, that perverse children should actually die in the disappointment of their inclinations, than that they should make both themselves, and their parents, for ever miserable, by an unfortunate and undutiful marriage.

S E R M O N IX.

E X O D. XX. 12.

*Honour thy father, and thy mother ;
that thy days may be long upon the
land which the Lord thy God giveth
thee.*

IN a former discourse upon these words, I shewed you, that this duty of honouring our parents, was of great extent: That it comprehended, first, The duty we owe to our kings and governors, who are the common fathers of their country. Secondly, The duty we owe to our spiritual pastors and teachers, who have discharged the best offices of parents towards us, in teaching us true principles of religion and virtue: and, thirdly, The duty you owe to your natural parents, and all those whom the Providence of GOD hath placed in their stead, which consists of three parts.

First,

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First, Reverence; secondly, Obedience; and, thirdly, A grateful Retribution of the Benefits that we have received from them.

Under the first head, I shewed you, that the duty of Reverence to your Parents discovered itself both in words and actions; in modest and respectful language to your parents, and a dutiful submissive demeanour towards them. A remarkable instance of which I shewed you, in the behaviour of *Joseph*, to a poor, old, blind, decrepit father, when he himself was in the highest point of glory and wisdom, *Gen. xlviii.*

Under the second head, of Obedience due to Parents, I shewed you the great stress that *God Almighty* hath laid upon this duty; how strictly it was enjoined in the Holy Scriptures, the blessings promised to it, and the curses and signal judgments of *God* denounced against the transgression of it in the law of *Moses*, which placed the crime of disobedience to parents upon the same foot with that of blasphemy against *God*; that the stubborn and undutiful child was to be stoned to death, like the blasphemer.

I shewed you also, that this duty to parents was in the highest veneration among the
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wiser heathens; the antient *Romans*, in their days of virtue; and the present *Chinese*, with whom undutifulness to parents undergoes, at this day, the most dreadful punishments than can be imagined.

I come now to the third thing proposed; which was to shew you, That you must honour your parents, as by reverence and obedience, so likewise by a thankful and grateful return, of all the blessings and benefits conferred upon you by them, as far as you are able, and they are in need — And this the Apostle expressly enjoins in the vth ch. 1st ep. to *Tim.* 4. ver. *If any widows have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents* — The Apostle mentions the children of widows in particular; because widowhood is the condition in life most subject to want and distress; and where children, taking the advantage of the weakness of a helpless mother, are most apt to be rebellious and undutiful; the purpose of the Apostle, in this precept, being to imply, from this particular instance, the duty of obedience, and support, and retribution, due from children to parents, whenever the ill state of their affairs requires it;

it; and even when they are least in a condition to exact their gratitude, or punish their disobedience — A remarkable instance of this piety and reverence due to parents is in the behaviour of *Solomon* to his mother *Bathsheba*, *1 Kings* ii. 19. when she came to solicit him in favour of *Adonijah*; for the text tells us, that *the King rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on the throne, and caused a seat to be set for the King's Mother; and she sat on his right-hand.* This he did to a widow mother, himself a King, the wisest of all mankind, and then the mightiest Monarch of the whole world. He knew the duties of life rose with its grandeur, and gave new lustre to it; his enlarged and generous soul could not bear to have his piety less exalted than his power — And, it is well known, that there are, at this day, Princes in the world, whose veneration for their parents will not suffer them so much as to sit down in their presence *. And, God knows, the pious returns due from children to parents are at once the strongest dictates of

* See Ambassadors Travels, p. 139.

gratitude and justice, and are but a poor retribution for all the care and expence of education, for all the anxious hours, and sleepless nights, that have been passed in solicitude for our welfare, and in distress for our ill health, and ill conduct. And will you requite all this affection with ingratitude and neglect? Will you let them suffer under any necessity which you can relieve, who supported you for so many years of helpless want? Will you despise their persons, of whom yourselves are a part? Surely, if the ingenuity of nature, and the principles of reason and virtue, are not quite extinguished in you, the love and solicitude your parents have long felt for you, will exact ample returns from you; if not in equal measure, (which perhaps is not possible) yet in the fullest, the amplest, the most acceptable, that it is in your power to make.

The course and compass of God's Providence, and his methods of establishing and evidencing the measures of reciprocal duty, is no where more remarkable than in the mutual obligations between parents and their children (I say, the course of God's Providence is no-where more remarkable, than

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in the measures of duty and obligation established between parents and their children); the child comes into the world naked and helpless, and, from himself, more destitute of the natural means of security and support, than almost any of the inferior creatures. In this exigency, the parental care and tenderness steps in to his relief, supplies all his necessities, and relieves all his wants; bears with all his untowardly dispositions, at an age when he is neither capable of being corrected or convinced; and not only provides the properest food for him, when he is incapable of providing any for himself, but likewise administers it, when he is incapable of feeding himself; bears with all degrees of his folly and impertinence; listens to all his trifling and idle inquiries, not only with patience, but with pleasure, till they gradually conduct him to health, and strength, and knowledge: But the child is not long arrived at this perfection of his nature, before his parents begin to fall gradually into the same infirmities, thro' which they but lately conducted and supported their children, and to need the same assistance which they lately lent. And, first, they begin to grow sickly; and then

then they call for the aid of that health which they cultivated and took care of in their children. The loss of chearfulness and good humour commonly succeeds the loss of health; the old parents are uneasy, and fret at all about them; And now is the time for children to return all that tenderness and patience to their parents peevishness, without sourness or reproof, which their parents had long lent them in all their childish perverseness, at an age when they were not capable of being corrected. In the next place, the old parents grow troublesomely talkative and (as youth is too apt to think) impertinent; and dwell eternally upon the observations and adventures of their times, and earlier years. Remember, you also had your time of being talkative and impertinent, and your parents bore with you; but, with this difference; you asked them silly and trifling questions, and they now tell you wise and useful observations. But they are troublesome, because they tell them too often — The answer to this is very obvious: If your parents bore with your folly, you may well bear their wisdom; and although, perhaps, they talk more than is necessary to inform you of

present things, yet their conversation turns mostly upon things past, perhaps past many years before you came into the world, and, consequently, such as they must know a thousand times better than you; or, though they should talk more than is necessary to inform you, they do not talk more than is necessary to inform your servants, or your children, who are now come to an age of asking many questions; and, therefore, Providence hath well appointed, that their grandfather or grandmother are now in an humour to answer them all, and to supply them with a store of useful observations, which they want; nay, which they want to hear over and over again; which they want to have inculcated a thousand times; and which, without this assistance, would require a course of years to acquire for themselves — So that this humour of talkativeness, which is commonly thought so troublesome in old people, hath its use, and is most excellently appointed by Almighty God. But, say it were not, the children, in bearing with it, do but barely return their parents what they long since owed them.

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In the next place, the strength of the old parents fails them, and they cannot walk without a support; but, sure, you will not let them want one! How many years did they bear you in their arms! How many more did they lead you where you would be, and saved you from falling, and from danger! And will you now suffer those old limbs to totter and fall to the earth, which so often supported and saved yours, when they were weak and tender, and unable to support and save themselves? Certainly you will not; you cannot at once be guilty of so much cruelty and ingratitude. — In the last place, the understandings of the old parents begin to fail, and the strength of their minds doth not long outlive the strength of their bodies, but decays gradually, till they become again children; their teeth fall, and their tongues fail, and they are once more infants; and are now confined to their beds, as they were at first to their cradles. — This is the last stage of life, and here they demand all that care, and compassion, and tenderness, at your hands, when they are just going out of the world, which you called for at theirs, when you first came into it.

Thus is the course of nature fulfilled, and the circle of GOD's Providence completed. And what child, that had the least remains of gratitude or goodness, would not be delighted to pay off the great debt of nature, and to pursue this round of filial duty, in a conscientious discharge of all the good offices they owe their aged parents? Nay, what child, that had any goodness, would not regard this retribution as his greatest honour and happiness? What child, that had any goodness, would wish to live longer in this world, than whilst GOD inclined his heart to this delightful and glorious branch of his duty? For, surely, it is in this respect, more than in any other whatsoever, that *Solomon's* observation is verified, when he tells us, that *fathers are the glory of their children.*

And here we see, in part, the reason of the reward of *long life* promised in the text to dutiful children; for, as nothing so naturally shortens the lives of parents, as the misery and distress brought upon them by the disobedience and impiety of their children; and, on the other hand, nothing so greatly contributes to the peace and happiness of parents,

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and, of consequence, to their health and life, as the obedience and piety of their issue; nothing can be a more suitable reward of that piety, than length of life: and surely the blessing of long life, annexed to the duty of honouring the father and the mother, is no-where so complete, is no-where so perfect a blessing, as when the child hath the happiness to pay off the great debt of gratitude to his aged parents, to return some part of what he owes to them, for support and correction, for affection and tenderness, for example and instruction; and, in one word, for all the blessings of a religious and virtuous education; a debt for ever to be paid, and never to be discharged: and, therefore, *Homer*, in his usual strength of just and fine thinking, mentions it as a calamitous circumstance in the death of a young hero, that he was cut off in his bloom, before he had made any retribution to his parents for his education and support — ἔδ' εὖ τοκευσὶ
 θρεπλὰ φίλοις ἀπέδωκε.

Nay, although a parent were faulty, and failed in any or all these instances, yet still humanity calls upon us to compassionate their infirmities; and generosity should

prompt us to upbraid them with our goodness, and to pay where we did not owe. — There is an instance of heathen piety in this point, that christians should blush at — *T. Manlius* was ill treated, and turned out of doors, by a severe father, who was soon after called to an account by the *Tribune* for this, and some other part of his conduct; a day was appointed for his trial, and every one concluded his life was lost. The son heard of his danger, and, without saying a word to any mortal, went secretly to the *Tribune*, and inquired about it. The *Tribune* answered, That what he had heard was truth; and that a principal part of the accusation against him, was the cruel treatment he, his son, had received from him. — Upon this, *Manlius* puts a dagger to the *Tribune's* breast, and vowed immediate death to him, if he did not that moment drop the prosecution. — The *Tribune*, in terror of his life, solemnly swore he would, and did accordingly; and the next day reported the whole truth to the assembly, and the father was acquitted for the generosity of the son. How few sons are there now in the world, who would make as generous a return to the

tenderness and fondness of their fathers, as this son did to the cruelty of his!

There is also a remarkable instance of filial piety in the history of *China*. In the reign of the Emperor *Vuen Ti*, a *Mandarin* was condemned to death; and was guilty enough to deserve it. He had the good fortune to have a daughter affectionate and dutiful to him, beyond the ordinary measures of filial piety; who addressed the Emperor in his behalf, presenting a memorial to him, wherein she offered herself a slave for life, to save the life of her father. The Emperor, struck with so extraordinary an instance of piety, pardoned the father, and left his daughter in her freedom (*Churchill's collect. vol. 1. p. 164.*). And this was the more remarkable, inasmuch as daughters are little regarded by the *Chinese*, and often exposed.

There is one instance of filial obedience in the Scriptures, and of the great regard which God hath to it, both of a very extraordinary nature. *Jonadab*, the son of *Rechab*, had laid his commands upon his sons, that neither they, nor their descendants, should drink wine, or build houses, or till the earth for ever; but that they should lead

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pastoral life, and dwell in tents. — This command of their father, both they and their children so religiously obeyed, for many generations, that, in the days of *Jehoiakim*, the son of *Josiah*, they gave a public proof of their piety to their parent in the temple, and in the presence of the Prophet, as you may read in the xxxvth chapter of the prophecy of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, the 1st and the following verses. And although these commands of their father *Jonadab* had no strict claim to their obedience, either from the law of nature, or the law of GOD, but might well enough be dispensed with consistently with both; yet GOD (to shew the regard he hath for piety to parents) was graciously pleased to reward their obedience in a very extraordinary manner; as you may read in the forecited chapter, at the 18 and 19 verses. *And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Because you have obeyed the voice of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you; therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God*
of

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of Israel — Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

And thus I have gone through the several parts of the child's duty to his parents, and have shewn you the great regard that Almighty God beareth to filial piety — I have shewn, that you are to honour your parents in words and actions, with expressions of respect and reverence, and with a modest and submissive behaviour, with a dutiful obedience to all their lawful commands, and a grateful retribution of all the blessings and benefits you have received from them: Remember the blessing of long life promised by God to your obedience, and assure yourselves, that blessing, well used, will end in the blessing of life everlasting. On the other hand, remember the dreadful imprecations pronounced upon neglect, and impiety, and disobedience to parents — Remember whose eye it is that the ravens of the valley shall eat, and whose light it is that shall be put out in obscure darkness — in obscure darkness in this world, and eternal darkness in the next; even his, *that curseth his*

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his father, or his mother; and his, that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother. Nor are these curses due only to him that insults and abuses his parents, but also to him that flights and neglects them; for so we read, *Deut. xxvii. 16. Cursed is he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.* But if all this cannot move you, if you have no compassion for your own immortal souls, have some pity upon your afflicted and aged parents [I * speak this to an audience, which I hope is, I am sure ought to be, more sensible in this point, than any other of a different condition in the whole world]. My own experience [in this place] hath fully informed me, of the infinite, the unspeakable concern of parents, for the well-being of their children, and their much more unspeakable sorrow and affliction for their miscarriage. I have seen such joy rising in the eyes of a happy parent, upon the receiving a glad account of his son's conduct, as hath infused new transport into my own

* When preached in the College.

heart;

heart ; and, on the other hand, I have seen such distracted looks, such fixed distress, such tears of anguish, from the eyes of unhappy parents, as have pierced my heart. — If your parents grief make this impression upon the breasts of strangers, can you be insensible of it ? Is there in nature a greater instance of cruelty, than to give calamity and affliction, where we owe joy and transport, and where we could pay it with double happiness to ourselves ? Was ever any instance of barbarity devised, like that of making those inexpressibly miserable, who have made it the business of their lives to make us eternally happy ? Murder is, in every instance, and under the most alleviating circumstances of passion and provocation, a most heinous and detestable sin ; but, surely, the bringing down a parent's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, is murder in its dreadfulest shape ! I have often pitied the condition of executioners, who were forced, from the misery of their circumstances, to inflict the necessary severities of the law upon the basest of mankind. — I should die to think of punishing my own parent, although he were

a malefactor; but to punish an innocent and a good man, to punish an innocent and a good woman, my tender parent, and my best friend, and that too with such anguish as is not in the power of tyranny — O God! deliver all that fear Thee from so exquisite a calamity!

If any of you, that hear me, have been guilty of this sin, make haste to repent of it; for, surely, judgment is gone out against it, and nothing less than a thorough repentance, the repentance of your whole lives, can arrest the vengeance due to it. If any of you are in a course of vice or idleness, or in any purpose of disobedience or displeasure to your parents, let this single consideration stop you short — Will you indulge your own idle purposes, or vicious pleasures, or obstinate perverseness, at the expence of your parents happiness? Will you live idle and wanton, to make them labour under affliction and sorrow all their days? Will you add murder to iniquity? — If vice were attended with no other evil; if neither poverty, nor disease, nor infamy, waited upon it; if there were no such

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such thing as a heaven or hell hereafter; if neither death nor damnation pursued it; the single consideration of misery to your distressed, afflicted parents, should make you dread it in every instance, and shun it in every shape. — Which that we may all do, &c.

in every family - which does not mean
you should it in every instance, and then it
difficultly obtained patients, should make
the single consideration of trying to your
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such thing as a heaven or hell hereafter;

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[77]
a natural incapacity of providing and
being were obliged to submit themselves
and their concerns to the guidance and
direction of their masters. A
series of abilities occasioned as great
difference upon

SERMON X.

EPHES. VI. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ:

Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

With good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men:

Knowing, that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Servitude seems to have been originally founded in the natural inequality in the abilities of men: for, as some men, from the advantage of greater prudence and more extensive knowledge, are fitted to direct and preside in the conduct of affairs; so others, for want of those advantages, and through

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a natural incapacity of providing and directing, were obliged to submit themselves and their concerns to the guidance and discretion of other men. And as this difference of abilities occasioned as great a difference in the possessions of men, upon the establishment of property in the world, from hence also arose another reason of servitude; forasmuch as some men being intirely destitute of property, or at least such a portion of it as was sufficient for their support, were forced to let themselves out to hire, and give their labour in exchange for the necessaries of life. And as these compacts were originally established for life, with a power of arbitrary correction and chastisements in the master, even to maiming and death, the insolence and cruelty of inhuman masters, made the condition of servants a state of unspeakable misery for many generations; and the natural consequence from such ill treatment and inhumanity in the masters, was idleness and neglect on the side of the servants, and an utter disregard of their master's interest, whenever it was consistent with their own safety, together with secret resolutions of
revenge

revenge, upon the first opportunity. And hence it is, that in all the antient comedies, which are the truest representations of life, the business of the slave is, always to corrupt the son, and defraud the master: that is, to injure him in his two nearest concerns; not without violence to his person, whenever he can find any pretence for a disguise to execute his vengeance with impunity.

In this condition Christianity found the world: and as it is the business of that excellent institution, to correct the errors of mankind, and improve their manners; to banish violence and villainy, and introduce peace and good-will in their stead; the world hath been gradually humanized and improved by it, as in every other instance, so likewise in this of dominion and servitude. That excellent Religion, which teaches us, that Humility, and Mercy, and Love, are the distinguishing badges of our christian profession, could not fail to teach us the duty of treating our fellow-creatures with gentleness and humanity; and inspire us with an utter abhorrence of that cruelty to our christian brethren, which would ill become us to the beasts that perish;

rish; nay, and would be criminal even there. And hence it came to pass, that the laws of perpetual servitude, and the power of life and limbs, were gradually relaxed and taken away, and mankind restored to their native and original freedom, and social rights. And altho' many of them cannot yet subsist out of a state of servitude, yet are they under no necessity of continuing in it, for any longer term than they themselves have consented to; so that, if they cannot live in absolute freedom, they have at least, what is next to it; for to have it in our power to change our masters after a determined time, and cease to serve whenever the condition of our affairs will allow us, is in the next degree to full liberty. In the mean time, the lives and limbs of servants are as well secured to them, at least in this part of the world, as their masters to them; and to deprive them of either, is, in the eye of the law, equally criminal. But then, on the other hand, that masters should not be put in a worse condition, by the diminution of their powers and prerogatives over their servants, the christian religion hath now bound all that duty and fidelity upon the consciences of servants,

which

which before were only the effects of restraint and fear. Hence it is, that *St. Paul*, in the words of my text, enjoins servants to pay all kind of observance to their masters, from the motives of a good conscience, and a sense of duty towards God; assuring them, that an honest discharge of their duty in this point, is highly acceptable in the sight of God, and will have its reward. *Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ:*

Not with eye-service; as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart:

With good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

Knowing, that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Now, the business of this discourse shall be, from these words of the Apostle, to explain and enforce the Duty of Servants in all its parts; which I shall endeavour to do, in the proof and enforcement of the following propositions.

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First, Servants are to obey their Masters;
And,

Secondly, They are to be faithful to
them.

First, I say, they are to obey their masters. And this necessarily arises from the nature of servitude; for the very condition of that compact is, that one man shall submit his will and actions to the discretion and direction of another: and therefore a servant is supposed to have no will of his own, where his master is concerned; but to submit himself intirely to the will of his master, and to obey all his lawful commands.

By lawful commands are meant all such as are not contrary to the laws of God, or the community: and the reason of this is evident; because all mankind are under prior obligations to God and society; and therefore all other engagements must yield to these: and whenever they happen to be inconsistent with them, they immediately cease, and become null and void. Therefore, if your master should command you to lye, or steal, to defame, or defraud, or commit any vice or villainy whatsoever, there you are absolutely to disobey him, because
God

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God hath commanded you, not to do any of these things; and the Apostles have taught us, that we ought to *obey God rather than men.* But as long as the master's commands are within the bounds of religion, and the laws of the land, so far the servant is obliged to submit, and pay intire obedience to them. And this he is to do with fear, and chearfulness.

First, He is to obey with fear: *Servants,* (saith the Apostle) *be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling.* Now where men find themselves obliged to a dutiful and conscientious obedience, it is unavoidable but that they must be afraid of giving any offence, or provoking to anger and resentment, by neglect and disobedience. Fear is a natural restraint upon the giddiness and perverseness of our nature: it awakens all our caution and diligence, and makes us attentive and observant: it makes us careful to understand the directions of our superiors, and diligent to execute them. And therefore we may say of it in this case, as *Eliphaz* does to *Job*, *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence?* The sense of a proper awe upon our minds,

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gives

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gives us the best assurance of our having a due regard to the commands of our superiors, and the discharge of our duty. Besides this, fear is the great principle of prudence, as well as industry: it awakens the abilities of the soul, sets them to work upon their proper objects, and urges them to their proper ends. Almost all knowledge as well as discipline and virtue, are founded in fear. *The fear of the Lord, saith Solomon, is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do thereafter.* And as the fear of the highest authority naturally leads us to the highest and most excellent wisdom; so the reverence we owe to the inferior degrees of it, leads us to proportionable degrees of discretion and prudence, in the conduct of our lives. And therefore servants are to be awfully observant, and obedient to the commands of their masters, not only for conscience sake, but likewise on account of that improvement of their own minds and manners, which such a reverence and fear of authority will naturally inspire. But,

Secondly, Servants are to obey with chearfulness: *With good-will doing service,*
saith

saith the Apostle: and therefore they are carefully to avoid all that sullen and surly behaviour which renders their persons hateful, and their best services disagreeable. A sourness and restiveness to the commands of superiors, is a sure indication of inherent pride, that disdains subjection; and is much better fitted for insolence in power, than obedience in subjection. And this spirit of insolence is so frequently to be met with in servants, that a man who makes right reflections upon it, will find infinite reason to bless the good Providence of Almighty God, by whose wise appointment so many turbulent and malignant spirits were placed in a condition of the lowest subjection; who had they been raised to dominion and rule, would have been the greatest monsters of oppression and tyranny that ever the world produced. Histories of all ages are full of examples to this purpose: and that this is the sense of mankind upon the point, may be collected from the proverbs of all nations, which have not failed to observe upon the remarkable insolence of persons raised from a low condition to any heights of fortune. And this is so apparent in a thousand instances,

stances, that (as *Sylla* is said to have seen many *Marius's* in *Cæsar*) some men of good understanding have been confident, that they have observed many *Neros* in a common footman, or day-labourer : and therefore persons of this character, instead of indulging their innate pride, in insolence and fullness to their superiors, should endeavour to the utmost of their power, to subdue it to the dictates of their duty ; and remember, it was the great goodness of Almighty God, to place them in that low condition of life, where the malignity of their nature would have least room to exert itself, and where they have avoided much of that guilt and that punishment, which higher degrees of power and affluence would have devolved upon them. And this motive to modesty and submission in servants, will be much strengthened, by considering, that pride and stiffness will always expose them to ill treatment. A modest demeanour, joined to a readiness to execute the master's commands, is such an indication of a good mind and good will to their service, as naturally wins their affection, and inclines them, in return, to do you all the good offices in their power,

and

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and to make the yoke of servitude sit as light and easy upon you as they can; whereas the contrary behaviour will always excite them to such degrees of rebuke and correction, as perhaps you can very ill bear; and yet are obliged in conscience to submit to, whether they be just, or unjust. *Servants*, saith St. Peter in the i^{id} chap. of his first epistle, at the 18th and following verses—*Servants, be subject to your masters, with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; for this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully: for what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently? But if when you do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently: this is acceptable with God.* From hence we learn, that servants are not only obliged to submit to the just corrections of their masters; but likewise to such as are the effects of frowardness and ill temper. And as nothing is so apt to sour the temper of the best masters, as fullness and insolence in their servants; so nothing is more apt to bring unjust correction upon them, because it makes every thing they do, disagreeable,

disagreeable, however right in itself; and urges the master to lay hold on all opportunities and pretences, of subduing and mortifying that evil spirit, by the sharpest and severest correction: whereas, on the other hand, humility and meekness have the happiest effects upon the dispositions of all they deal with. They turn the edge of the sharpest rage; they are like wool-sacks to the fiercest instruments of war; their yielding softness abates their violence, and subdues their force. Meekness is, in this respect, like charity; for as it *beareth all things*, so likewise doth it *cover a multitude of sins*. *A soft answer* (saith Solomon) *turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger*. And again, *By long forbearance is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone*. That is, Gentle and modest replies soften the most hardened and obstinate dispositions; and descend, as the *Psalmist* expresses it, *like oil into the bones*. Modesty and humility are as the grave ground in a picture, which sets off the fairest colours, and shews all the figures to greater advantage. Modesty, in a servant, places all his actions in the best light; and inclines the most froward and
 perverse

perverse masters to bear with their infirmities, and put the best construction upon all their conduct.

But farther, servants are not only to submit to the correction of their masters, but they are to profit and become better by it: for amendment and reformation are the end of all correction: and therefore servants must not think they have done enough, when they have listened calmly to the master's rebuke, or submitted patiently to his chastisement; for all this is to no purpose, unless they are amended by it. And therefore they are to observe, and reflect carefully upon the reasons and circumstances of their miscarriage and misbehaviour, whenever they have committed a fault; and make serious resolutions of more care and better conduct another time. For example: This was the effect of sloth and idleness: This, my conceit brought upon me. Had I listened to good advice, I might have avoided this mischief; and so on. And forasmuch as the business of most servants lies within a very narrow compass, the sum of their employment being a train of the very same low offices repeated every day, with very little variety;

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variety; it is evident, that as there is but a very moderate degree of capacity required to enable them to know their duty; so likewise as moderate a degree of care and diligence will enable them to discharge it as they ought: and therefore whatever excuse there may be for the first committal of faults, there can be none for the frequent repetition of them, especially after correction: for even brute beasts will learn to shun those actions that are attended with punishments, even against the instinct of nature. They will learn to fly from meats and drinks that are naturally very agreeable and desirable to them; and therefore, for reasonable creatures to commit the same faults to which they can have no natural instinct, after frequent rebuke and correction, is in truth to become more than brutal; to act even below the beasts that perish. • And therefore it is no wonder, if the common end of such incorrigible creatures is utter ruin and destruction. The master grows weary of correction, and lets them go their own way; and their own way being the way of vice and villainy, leads directly to infamy and the gallows. And indeed, this is also God's way of dealing
with

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with incorrigible sinners; for *whom he loveth, he chasteneth*; but when chastening hath no effect for their amendment, he delivers them over to a reprobate sense.

And thus much in proof and explication of the first proposition I laid down; namely, That servants are to obey their masters.

I come now to the second proposition I proposed to speak to; and that was, That servants are to be faithful to their masters.

And this Faithfulness is of two sorts: The first consists in an honest discharge of duty to them, in every thing they employ you about, to the best of your abilities. If in bodily labour, you are to labour in their service, as far as your health and strength will allow: if in the abilities of your mind, you are to serve them to the best of your understanding, without injuring their affairs by sloth, or delay, or negligence: and this kind of fidelity is opposed to *eye-service*.

The next sort of faithfulness consists in being true and just to your masters in every thing committed to your trust: and this fidelity is opposed to fraud and theft.

First, I say, you are to serve him with an honest diligence without idleness, neglect,
or

or delay: and this the Apostle requires, when he enjoins servants to be obedient to their masters, *not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart*; that is, You are to employ yourselves diligently in your master's service, not barely whilst his eye is upon you, and you are apprehensive of being chastised for your idleness; but at all times, even when he is least likely to see, or to punish your neglect. And this you are to do in discharge of a good conscience, because you are paid for it: your time and strength are no longer your own, when you are hired; they are your master's, and to be employed in his service; and consequently you cannot employ them as you please, but as he directs; nor can you misemploy them, or withhold them from him, without manifest fraud and injustice. Robbing a man of the time he hath bought of you, is just as wicked as to rob him of his money, or his goods, or any other purchase he hath paid for. The injustice is exactly the same in both; and therefore the Apostle saith, *you are to be obedient to your masters, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers*;

fers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; that is, you are to discharge the duties of your service out of a sense of conscience, in full assurance, that in so doing you do what God requires of you; for God requires justice in all your dealings, and will severely punish the neglect and violation of it: and therefore, although your master doth not behold your idleness, God sees it, and will require a severe account of it; and you can no more escape his vengeance, than you can avoid his sight: besides, it has pleased God so to order the state of things here below, that diligence and industry are the sure way to health, and credit, and prosperity in the world.

Idleness is able to destroy the best constitution of body and mind, that ever was framed; and I myself have observed beggars, who began in sloth, end in real infirmities, and a ruined constitution. And it is notorious of numbers of people, that they lose their limbs for want of using them; whereas all the powers of soul and body are remarkably improved by application and exercise. *Milo*, who had just strength enough the first

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day to lift a calf, by constant practice of lifting him every day, became at last to have strength enough to lift him, even when he was grown up into an ox: and the greatest prodigies of wisdom and science that ever appeared in the world, had their beginnings in the same low rudiments of knowledge with the rest of mankind. Men are born, in the general, nearly equal: instruction and industry, culture and diligence, make the great distinctions between man and man. Industry is of so excellent a nature, that it will scarcely suffer any bounds to be set to our improvement; nor is it possible to say, to what strength of body and mind unwearied application will carry us at the last; and therefore *Solomon* most excellently advises, *Whatever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.* A motto, that ought to be graved in characters of gold, over the shops of all artists, as well as the closets of the studious. *Solomon* well knew the worth of diligence (and perhaps none but the wisest man that ever lived, was acquainted with its full value); and therefore he is large in the praise of it, *He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand; but the hand of the diligent*

diligent maketh rich. Again, *The hand of the diligent shall bear rule; but the slothful shall be under tribute. The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.* And again, *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before Kings; he shall not stand before mean men.* And therefore, if you will not be diligent and industrious for your masters sakes, be so at least for your own, to acquire such habits as will strengthen your body and your mind, and raise you to credit and prosperity in the world; and, what is more, will keep you out of idleness, the great parent of vice and wickedness of every kind, which will cloathe you with infamy and rags, and bring you to certain ruin at the last: will destroy you, body and soul.

The last duty required of servants, is Faithfulness to their trust; that is, an honest care and management of all goods and things committed to their charge, without fraud, or waste. And this is of all others the highest and most important part of the servant's duty; because his own conscience and his master's interest are more nearly concerned in it than in any other: it being oftentimes in the

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power of a wicked servant by one hour's wilful villainy in this point, to ruin the best master, and the wealthiest man. And therefore the Apostle, in the words of my text, enjoins servants to be obedient to their masters, *in singleness of heart*; that is, with an honest and upright mind. And in chap. ii. of his epistle to *Titus*, ver. 9. he directs that Bishop to exhort servants to *be obedient to their masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again, nor purloining; but shewing all good fidelity*. And under this head of *purloining*, are to be reduced all frauds of every kind, all bribes, all false weights and measures, by which the servants are profited, and the master is injured; in short, all possible, ways whereby servants are wont to make gain, or interest, or friendship for themselves, to the loss and damage of their masters: for all these ways of gain are downright frauds and thefts, and are but the more criminal, as they are contrived with more subtlety and security: nay, this sort of cheating is much baser and more villainous than common stealing; because you do not only defraud your master, but you likewise break faith, and betray
your

your trust at the same time: you add treachery to theft; and therefore this villainy is doubly hateful to God and man.

The other way of being unfaithful to your master, is by wasting his goods, although without profit to yourself, or suffering them to be imbezled by others: and this is in effect, and in the consequences of it to your masters, the very same with wilful fraud and theft. For what matters it to your master whether he is ruined by your fraud, or by your negligence? So that the breach of trust in you, and the evil to your master, is exactly the same in both. He trusted you with his substance, and you have betrayed him to his damage; it may be, to his ruin.

As the world is constituted, it is impossible to live or transact our affairs in life without confiding in somebody or other, upon a thousand occasions: and on whom can you depend with so much security, as on him that eats of your bread, and is bound by all the ties of duty and conscience, to be faithful to you? And what advantage would it be to masters, to be secure that their servants would not themselves cheat them, if at the same time, through

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their idleness or negligence, they suffer others to defraud them? And therefore, he that suffers his master to be injured through his fault, although without profit to himself, betrays his trust, and is as criminal in the sight of God, as if he had injured him for his own gain; nay, rather, he is more criminal; for he that injures his master for his own profit, hath some plea, some pretence for his villainy, and some temptation to it; whereas he that injures him without any advantage to himself, hath no pretence, not so much as the excuse of a temptation for his wickedness: and therefore such a one takes to himself the most scandalous and detestable character in the world, that, of being wicked for wickedness sake.

But there is one point wherein the fidelity of servants is more eminently required, than in any other whatsoever; and yet where they are wont to abuse and betray their trust more than in any other; and that is, The care of their masters children. I shall omit a thousand instances of misconduct and abuse, and instance only in two. The first is that abominable custom among servants, of teaching children vice and wickedness, as the first

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rudiments of knowlege. And this is so notorious, that, take any child you meet, and it is odds but the first sentence or word he learnt to speak, was either an oath, or an ill name: and if servants are taken to task for this villainy, they answer, There is no manner of harm in it, because the poor child does not know what he says. Perhaps he does not; but yet it is more probable that he does; for it is certain, that children often understand words even before they can speak them: and if they do speak some ill words before they understand them, I dare say, it will not be your fault, if they continue long in that ignorance; for the same corruption of mind that prompted you to teach them those ill words, will also prompt you to make them understand what is meant by them, as soon as you can; and not only understand, but practise too. Ye wicked creatures! little do ye consider, that the first impressions made upon children always sink the deepest, and last the longest, and are hardly possible to be effaced from the mind. And therefore *Solomon* rightly advises, *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart*

from it. And the observation is full as true, I am afraid, more so, if you train him up in the way he should not go. Shame is the great guardian of youth, the great barrier that secures them from sin and wickedness; and if that be early taken away, a flood of vice will break in upon them like a torrent, and overwhelm the whole man. Alas! little do ye consider what you will have to answer for at the great day of account, who in return to all the care and kindness of a good master, have destroyed, perhaps his only child, and turned the innocence of an Angel into the guilt of a Devil. I would to God, that in order to deter servants from this abominable practice, there were laws to make all crimes of this kind punishable by the most tormenting death that ever was invented; and yet, when that was done, it would make but little atonement for those infinitely greater torments of Hell, to which those wretches had betrayed so many helpless and innocent infants.

The second instance I shall mention of the infidelity of servants to the children of their masters, and too often to themselves, is Flattery; a vice which is founded in the worst

worst corruption of a wicked heart, and is the greatest destroyer of every virtue in the soul: it is a rank manure which raises nothing but weeds in the best soils. Nor is this all; for as it raises and feeds the worst weeds, it kills the best plants, and suffers nothing good and salutary to live near it. A flatterer always puts me in mind of those filthy beasts mentioned by many naturalists, whose way of destroying all that will endure them, is by licking them to death.

And thus I have done with the several parts of the servants duty: and the sum of all that God requires of him, is this: First, That he be obedient to all his master's just commands; that is, such as are not contrary to the laws of God, or the laws of the land; but he is not to obey him in any thing that is evil: therefore he is not to swear, or lye, or defraud, or commit any sort of vice or villainy in obedience to his master, because God has forbidden him to do any of these things; and he is to obey God rather than man.

Secondly, He is to obey his master with Fear. And this will make him cautious and observant; will check the natural pride and perverse-

perverseness of human nature, and bring him by degrees to discretion and prudence; for all wisdom, and all virtue, begins and is founded in fear.

Thirdly, He is to obey chearfully, with good will doing service; and therefore he is carefully to avoid all pride and insolence, all short and sullen answers. These are the faults that make servants hateful, and render every thing they do, disagreeable, and expose them to the wrath and vengeance of their master; whereas modesty and chearfulness recommend both themselves and every thing they do; and place all their services in the best light.

Fourthly, They are to submit to the corrections of their masters, whether just or unjust; and not only to submit to them, but to amend by them. To be incorrigible even in neglect, (and much more in guilt) is a most shameful character, and seldom ends but in utter ruin.

Fifthly, Servants are to use an honest diligence in the discharge of their duty; and this, in opposition to idleness and eye-service: and this they are to do, first, for conscience-sake towards their masters, because

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God requires it of them; and, secondly, for their own sakes, because diligence and industry are the sure means to health, and credit, and prosperity in the world.

And, in the last place, servants are to be true and just to their masters, and faithful in the care and discharge of all trust committed to them (especially the care of his children); and are neither to injure or defraud them themselves, nor to suffer others to do so; because all the injury you do your master, if it be for your own profit, is theft; and the worst of all thefts, because it is attended with treachery and breach of trust; and if it be without profit to yourself, the injury to your master, and the breach of trust in you is still the same; and you are at the same time more inexcusable, because you commit wickedness for wickedness sake.

And now, my brethren, when you have discharged all these parts of your duty, the next thing incumbent upon you as good Christians, is to be content with that low condition of life, in which it has pleased God to place you: and you will be content, if you consider, that God governs the world;
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and that all his appointments are the appointments of the Wisest and the Best of all beings. And therefore, whatever state of life he assigns us, must be the very best that could be assigned us. Had you been placed in a higher station, how can you tell what pride and insolence, what vice and villainy you had been exposed to, which might have ended in the destruction both of your body and soul? And therefore, instead of repining at your condition, you are to bless God, who hath not led you into so great temptations as wealth, and power, and grandeur are, but delivered you from evil. If you suffer from a severe master, consider, that altho' you might not have deserved chastisement at his hand, you have deserved that and much more at the hand of GOD; and what is it to you, by what instrument it pleases God to execute his correction upon you? And this you know, that if, *when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.* Consider moreover, that although your condition is subject to many inconveniencies; yet in the midst of these, it has one great and peculiar advantage; and that is, that you are freed

freed by it from some, if not all the great anxieties of life. For what is all that for which the sons of men toil and disquiet themselves in this vale of misery, but a little food and raiment, and a convenient shelter from the weather? and two of these, the very worst of you, have ready provided to your hands, at your masters expence, without any care or trouble of your own; and many of you have all three. But what above all gives the great and distinguishing advantage to your condition, is this; that as you have less to be anxious for in this world, you have less to be answerable for in the next: to you less is given, and of you less is required. What are all the power, and wealth, and dominion of this world, but so many great stewardships, of which the owners must give a severe account to their great Lord and Master at the Last day? And what man in his senses would wish to have a long and heavy account upon his hands, at the great day of judgment? Do but imagine a mighty potentate, summoned together with his meanest vassal, to the great tribunal of God; and the question fairly put to him, What hast thou done with all that wealth and all that

that power I committed to thy charge? *Give an account of thy stewardship.* Alas! Where is that mighty man upon earth, that could give clear and satisfactory answers to these questions? Who would have wealth, who would have power, who would have a great estate, who would have an empire, upon these terms? Whereas, when the poor servant is questioned, if he has been a good man, his accounts are short, and his answers are easy; Lord, I have served Thee, and been faithful to my Master; I had but little, and I did my diligence gladly, to give of that little. And the Lord shall answer, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful in a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

To which blessed sentence, God of his infinite mercy grant we may all be happily intitled, through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

SERMON

S E R M O N XI.

Ephes. vi. 9.

And ye, masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in Heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him.

THE Apostle having, in the foregoing verses, directed the duty of Servants, and urged them to a conscientious discharge of it, from a sense of duty towards God, and the rewards that would await their fidelity from his hand, proceeds in this verse to injoin the Masters to do the same by them: Now, by doing the same, is not meant doing the very same things, but doing the same reciprocal duties; that is, as servants are to be faithful and just to their masters, and to perform all parts of their duty towards them,
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from a regard to conscience, and the rewards of a future state, so likewise are masters to do the same unto them; that is, to perform all the parts of their duty towards their servants, from the same motives and principles, *forbearing threatening*; or, rather, as the original word signifies, *remitting their threats*; that is, not always executing the harsh declarations they have made, or resolutions they have taken up, against them, but refraining and receding from the severe sentences they have denounced in their wrath, remembering, that they *also have a Master in Heaven*, whose will they also violate, and whose commands they disobey; and yet, should he execute his just vengeance upon their transgressions, *should he be extreme to mark what is done amiss, who might abide it?*

From the words thus explained, the business of this discourse shall be, to lay down the duty of masters to their servants in all its parts; and this I shall endeavour to do in the explanation and proof of the following propositions:

First, Masters are to do Justice to their servants.

Secondly,

Secondly, They are to correct them in their faults.

Thirdly, They are to set them good example.

Fourthly, They are to allow them means of instruction in their duty towards God, and leisure to perform their duty.

And, lastly, They are to encourage them in well-doing.

First, I say, masters are to do justice to their servants ; and this justice consists in two points : first, In not exacting immoderate and unreasonable labour at their hands : and, secondly, In an honest payment of their wages.

First, You are to require no more than an equal and moderate portion of labour from your servants, unlike those cruel *Egyptian* task-masters, who, as the text expresses it, *made the children of Israel to serve with rigour, and made their lives bitter with hard bondage* ; and, at last, proceeded to that extremity of cruelty against them, that they exacted the same hard measure of work from them, without allowing them the materials necessary to the performance of it. *Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick :*

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let them go and gather straw for themselves; and the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them; you shall not diminish ought thereof; for they be idle. --- For they be idle; the common cry of all cruel and unmerciful masters, at the same time that their poor vassals are labouring out their lives in their drudgery. *A righteous man* (saith Solomon) *regardeth the life of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* A man that hath any degree of goodness or humanity, hath compassion for the beasts that perish; and, altho' they were made for his use, cannot bear to see them labour out their lives in pain and misery: much less can he bear to behold his own fellow-creatures, who were made in the image of God, and are, by nature, his own equals; much less can he behold them panting and toiling to death in his own service; much less can he hasten their death, and make their *lives bitter with hard bondage.* This is the conduct of the righteous; *but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* And, indeed, there cannot possibly be a surer indication of abandoned corruption, of a disposition depraved to the
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last degree, than an hardened cruelty to those that are under our power ; for he that has put off mercy, the noblest, the loveliest likeness of Almighty God here below, must, of necessity, put off all virtue, and all goodness, along with it. But, let such wretched creatures remember, that there is a God, who heareth the voice of the *poor, and the oppressed, when they cry unto him*, as he did the distressed *Israelites*, when they groaned beneath their bondage ; there is a God that will visit their cruelty, as he did the cruelty of those merciless task-masters, with signal judgments, and severe vengeance.

I know it is a received opinion, among many ignorant creatures, who are doomed to slavery, that they are never to cease from their toil, in the presence of their masters. This my own experience has led me to observe ; and, therefore, it is the duty of all masters, in that case, to let them know, that they do not expect incessant labour from them ; forasmuch as no constitution can bear it : and if, at any time, the necessity of their affairs requires uncommon labour and application at the hands of their servants, it is their duty to devise, to contrive, all pos-

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sible relief and refreshment for them under it, as well as to allow them double relaxation after it. GOD knows, a state of servitude is a state wretched enough, in its best circumstances; and, therefore, a good man should endeavour to lighten the burden, and, instead of adding to the calamities of life, should make it his study, by all possible methods, to ease and relieve them, to the utmost of his power.

The next point of justice that we owe to servants, is, to pay them their wages honestly.

And, if justice be rightly defined, *a virtue that gives every one what of right belongs to him*, the virtue is never more itself, is never practised in greater perfection, than when it is employed in payments of this kind; for, if the price of servitude be not a right, what is? If a man hath not a just claim to what he has earned by the sweat of his brow, there is no such thing as a just claim in the world. And yet it is but too notorious, that many men are so regardless of justice, as well as humanity, in this point, that they do not scruple, first, to screw down their servants wages to a poor pittance, and then defraud them of that pittance. Little
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regarding the solemn commands of GOD to the contrary, and the just judgments he has denounced against this cruel injustice. *The wages of him that is hired, saith Moses, (Levit. xix. 13.) shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.* And again, in the xxivth ch. of Deut. 14th ver. *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant, that is poor and needy; at his day thou shalt give him his hire; neither shall the sun go down upon it, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be a sin unto thee.* Here we see, that we should be so far from defrauding our servants of their hire, that we are not to withhold the payment of it, even for one day; for, as the text saith, *he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it.* We cannot tell how strongly his necessities may call for it that moment; or, can we tell, how much he may suffer for want of it: it is a trifle to us; but it is his all, it is the price of many long and anxious hours; and, therefore, *he setteth his heart upon it.* It is like Jacob's purchase of *Rachel*, dearly earned, and dearly loved; it is a happiness that cometh but seldom, and, therefore, it is inhuman to delay it, and much more to rob and defraud him intirely

of it. A master, that had any humanity, would take delight to make his poor servant happy, as soon, and as often as he could : and would regard the robbing the labourer of his hire, as the cruellest and most monstrous robbery in the world. But this is not all ; for oppressing the labourer in his hire, however this be done, whether by defrauding him, or delaying payment, or screwing him down to such a miserable price as will not afford him the common comforts of life, or paying him in goods, which he must sell at half value ; all these, the last of these especially, is a crying sin, and one of the cruellest oppressions that ever was heard of ; and, therefore, it is no wonder, if God, by the mouth of his Prophet *Malachi*, denounces a speedy vengeance against so much cruelty : *And I will come near to you to judgment, saith the Lord* (Mal. iii. 5.) ; *and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages.* And, certainly, if we had but a moderate degree of good-nature, joined to common honesty, we should be so far from oppressing the hireling, by diminish-
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ing his just demands, that we should rather add to them; we should take delight to see our poor dependents thrive and prosper, and become happy under us. For, surely, the most glorious power and use of wealth is, to diffuse joy, and health, and happiness, wherever we come. That noble emblem of *Nebuchadnezzar*, (*Dan. iv.*) should, in some measure, be that of every man of power and wealth in the world. A flourishing fortune should, in this respect, resemble a flourishing well-grown tree; *as it grows great and strong, as the leaves thereof are fair*, so should *the fruit thereof be much*; and it should be *meat for many*; these are its noblest uses, to relieve and to refresh, to protect from storm and tempest, and project a salutary shade and shelter all around it. And yet some of the great trees of our earth are, in the very reverse of this character, of so malignant an influence, that they keep down and kill all that come under them; and, for that reason, should, like the fruitless tree in the gospel, be *cut down*; *Why cumbereth it the ground?* And, indeed, it may but too truly be said of them, not only, *Why cumbereth*, but also, *Why curseth it the ground?* And,

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no doubt, in the just judgments of Almighty GOD, they are oftentimes not only *cut down* for that reason, *but also cast into the fire.*

The second duty masters owe their servants is, to correct them in their faults; and this they are to do, not in such violence, and heat of passion, as may overset their reason, and carry their correction to excess; nor yet with such a Stoic calmness, as might make it be mistaken for deliberate cruelty, but with a temperate degree of just and reasonable resentment, and such as may convince their servants of the evil and error of their conduct. For servants are at all times apt enough to imagine, their masters only correct them to gratify their own ill-nature, or ill-humour, without any regard to their amendment; and, therefore, some pains should be taken to remove this prejudice, and to satisfy our servants, that our reproofs are meant for their good, and that we take much more pleasure in seeing them do their duty as they ought, than in punishing them for the neglect of it. And this will make the duty of servants to their masters, like the duty of mankind to Almighty GOD, at once an happy and a reasonable service. But, if this will not do, as,

GOD knows, many of them are insensible to all rational methods of conviction; then sharper and severer methods are to be made use of: and, indeed, some servants are of such rough and intractable dispositions, so haughty, and so hardened, that they are not to be subdued otherwise than as we are told a great captain subdued rocks, by fire and vinegar. But, although severity be necessary sometimes, care should be taken never to use it, but when it is necessary; and, therefore, that teizing vexatious humour of some masters is carefully to be avoided, that dwells eternally upon a fault, and delights in perpetual taunts and insults, upon the conduct and character of such as are in subjection to them. This, as it is hateful and inhuman, so likewise it is a servile disposition, and is a sure argument of an abject mean mind.

But to proceed.

The point where servants have most need of correction and admonition, and yet meet with least of it, is, in relation to their duty to GOD. Men are apt enough to chastise neglect and error in the conduct of their servants, as far as it regards their own concerns;

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cerns; but the concerns of Almighty God, the interest of religion and virtue, is of less moment with them. And yet, in reality, the dishonour done to Almighty God, and the eternal ruin of the meanest mortal, consequent to that dishonour, are, in themselves, of infinitely more importance, than all the concerns of this world put together. Will any loss of this world bear any comparison with the loss of an immortal soul! or any mortal gain weigh against that of saving a soul alive! And, therefore, when masters are immediately on fire for every transgression and neglect of their own will and pleasure, and, at the same time, cold and unmoved at the greatest enormities against the righteous and unerring Will of God; it is a sure sign, that they have great regard to their own interest, and very little for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. And, indeed, this is the great and crying complaint in the conduct of masters! their utter disregard of the religion and virtue of their servants! And, to this lamentable neglect, so extensive and universal, is owing the present general corruption among the lower part of mankind. It is notorious, that servants are, at
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this day, the most abandoned and profligate part of the creation; and, when these marry, or, which is much more frequent, become parents by their crimes, their wretched issue are brought up without any sense of conscience, or fear of GOD; for how should they inspire any sense of religion into their children, who are utterly void of it themselves? And thus the lower part of mankind go on from ignorance to iniquity, and are, at this moment, arrived to such an unspeakable degree of corruption, as is amazing to behold, and dreadful to think of! such as were sufficient to draw down GOD's heaviest judgments upon the land: so that we may cry out against this nation, as *Isaiah* does against the *Jews*, in the 1st ch. of his prophecy, *Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters! They have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger; they are gone away backward.* And to what is all this abomination, all this dreadful mass of iniquity, so justly to be ascribed, as to the neglect of masters? their conniving at the profaneness and irreligion of their servants, and intirely neglecting, either to exhort them to virtue

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and goodness; or to oblige them to a constant attendance upon the service of God. And, surely, masters of families would never be so careless in an affair of this consequence, did they consider what a severe account they shall give of this conduct at the last. All masters of families are governors and rulers in their own houses; and it is the duty of rulers to watch over the conduct of all persons under their care, especially those parts of it that are of the last consequence to them; and, therefore, as all rulers should be the *ministers of God for good*, so should they likewise be *a terror to evil works*. That this was *David's* sense of the matter, appears from the ci. *Psal.* where he solemnly professes, that he will employ none but the righteous in his service, and will not allow any wicked persons to be parts of his family. *He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit, shall not dwell within my house. He that telleth lyes, shall not tarry in my sight.* And, as this is the duty of all masters, as much as it was *David's*, so likewise is it no less their interest; and this upon two accounts: first,
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With regard to their children; and, secondly,
With regard to their fortune.

First, With regard to their children: for, as few parents have leisure, or are able wholly to take care of their children themselves, there is often a necessity of committing them to the care of servants; and it is certain, that, according as those servants are, either wicked, or well inclined, the child is early initiated, either in the ways of virtue, or in the ways of vice; and, as earlier habits last longer, and are harder to be defaced, if parents have any regard, either to the happiness of their children in this world, or their salvation in the next, nothing ought to be of nearer concern to them, than to commit them to the care of virtuous and religious servants in their tender years.

As to the other point, surely nothing can be more the interest of all masters of families, than that all their servants should make a conscience of their business, and should perform all parts of their duty to them *in singleness of heart, as unto Christ*. And, therefore, the sure way to make them good servants, is to make them good men, and good Christians; and the sure way to make them good
Christians,

Christians is, besides what hath been already urged, to shew them good example, which was the third thing I proposed to speak to.

Masters should set their servants a good example. Example sways the whole world, and either ruins or reforms it, as it is good or evil; as kingdoms are influenced by the example of the prince, and armies by the example of their captains, and all societies of men by such as have authority over them; families naturally fall into the imitation of their fathers, and servants are led insensibly into the manners of their masters. A good example is like a light set up on high, to guide mankind in the ways of salvation and truth; and, therefore, our blessed Saviour commands his disciples, and in them all Christians, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* The light of a good life is, indeed, a silent, but it is, at the same time, a strong, a living, and almost an irresistible exhortation to goodness; its native beauty attracts the love and admiration of all that behold it; and what men admire, they imitate; and if good example hath force enough to draw men to the

the imitation of it, alas! ill example hath yet a stronger and mightier influence; it prevails even against exhortation and instruction; and it is vain for an ill man to exhort to virtue and goodness, as long as his practice contradicts his precepts; for it is much easier to ruin by example, than to reform by precept; as it is far easier to pull down, than to build up; and, therefore, it is vain for a leud, a profane, an idle, and drunken master, to expect a modest, a sober, an industrious, and a pious family. And, indeed, how can a wicked master so much as expect, that a servant should be faithful to him, for the little pittance he receives from him, when he himself is so notoriously ungrateful and unfaithful to GOD, in return for all the blessings of life? If you expect your servants should be honest and good men, let them see you go to church constantly, and behave yourselves with becoming humility and devotion when you are there; let them see you act honestly and conscientiously in all your dealings; let them not observe you habitually careless to retire into your closet to your morning and evening devotions; or rather (not merely to insist upon negative goodness,

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goodness, or ceasing to do evil) let them observe you religiously careful to call your whole family together, to join with you in the worship of GOD; let them never hear a loose expression, a rash oath, or a profane jest, out of your mouths; *Let your light so shine before them, that they may see your good works*, and then will they be naturally led to *glorify your Father which is in Heaven*. And, surely, there cannot be a more lovely, there cannot be so lovely, so glorious an employment in life, as that of leading in the ways of salvation and truth, and conducting to eternal happiness. *Captain of our salvation*, is the most glorious title that ever was conferred even upon the Son of GOD; and, if so, certainly the contrary to all this, the conductor to vice and villainy, the leader to death and destruction, is the dreadfulest employment, as well as the most hateful character, in life.

But, fourthly, As masters are to admonish servants in the ways of their duty, and to set them good example, so likewise are they to allow them means of instruction, and leisure to perform their duty towards GOD. And this may be done at small expence, both of
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time and money, by allowing every member of your family a Bible, and Prayer-book, together with the Whole Duty of Man; and, if that be too great an expence, allowing one of each to the family in common. And, as the rates of these excellent books are, by the pious charity of some good men, reduced very low, this is an expence that most families can well bear; or, if any are yet so poor, as not to be able to go to this small expence, I am satisfied, that, by a modest application to their parish minister, such an invaluable treasure might be easily obtained; and, when it is obtained, a very small portion of leisure, allowed to the servants, for reading and contemplation, at proper seasons, will be sufficient for their instruction in that which should be the great business of life, their duty both to GOD and man: And this may be done on holidays, and other seasons of leisure; or, if an hour or two were now-and-then allowed to servants for this very purpose, as an extraordinary reward of diligence, possibly it might return to very good account. And, be assured, one hour, thus employed, will bring a blessing upon all the rest. Or, if this be more than the necessary business of

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your calling will allow, (as I am satisfied it is not) *the Sabbath is the Lord's*, let that, at least, be allowed your servants, for their instruction in the ways of salvation and life; and let it not only be allowed, but see that it also be employed in hearing of sermons, and attending upon the publick worship of God: And, above all, take care they are not with-held from the service of God, by being employed in the service of your luxury, vices, and vanities, as is too often the case of cooks and coachmen; and, if they are sometimes with-held by the necessary duties of their place, be it your care to see those omissions made up by a diligent attendance at other seasons.

The last duty of masters is, to encourage their servants in well-doing.

Rewards and punishments are the great springs and wheels that set the whole world in motion; there is hardly any thing to be done in life, without the aid of one or both of these. And, forasmuch as there is a pride in human nature, that often sets itself against correction, and is restive to reproofs, but pliant and yielding to the least expressions of kindness, it is frequently found, that applause
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and encouragement have more influence upon us, than correction and punishment. Pride is like the rust that seizes and stiffens the spring of an engine, and checks its motion, so that no force can set it to work; but kindness is like oil, which smooths and supple the machine, in such a manner, that the parts move of themselves. And this gentle method of dealing with our fellow-creatures is GOD's own method of dealing with mankind; who, we are assured, *doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live;* and chuses rather to lead us to repentance by his goodness, than to drive us to it by his wrath. And, as prudence and humanity prompt us to take this method of exciting our servants to duty, so justice and equity require, that when they have excelled in it, they should be rewarded and encouraged to the utmost of our power; for the same motives that excited them to excel, are the best engagements upon them to continue in well-doing. And, GOD knows, when a servant is truly faithful and diligent in the discharge of his duty, all the

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encouragement in our power is justly due to him. And, to speak reasonably upon this head, when a man lays out his whole time and care in our service, and makes it the study and business of his life to consult our happiness, and our interest, how can such a servant be too much encouraged? or, rather, how can he be rewarded enough?

And yet, after all, I am sensible, there is one objection to this doctrine, which I don't well know how to get over; and that is, that the greater part of servants will not bear to be encouraged, but are wont to grow so insolent, as soon as their masters have shewn any uncommon regard to them, that they immediately become intolerable, not only to their fellow-servants, but even to their masters themselves; for it is the nature of servile spirits, to be either low and creeping, to a fault; or imperious and proud, beyond bearing: and, in truth, I am at a loss what to say upon this head, or what method of conduct to prescribe in relation to such dispositions as these, unless we imitate the conduct of Almighty God, who *resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the lowly*. If servants always found that they constantly rose in their
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master's favour in proportion to their modesty and humility, and, on the other hand, found, that every degree of pride threw them into as great a degree of disgrace, this, joined to proper instruction and admonition, would probably have happy effects upon their dispositions. But, in truth, the great evil, which is the foundation of all this pride and perverseness, is the want of a right sense of religion and virtue. If they once knew, that humility would make them amiable in the sight of God and man, and that pride would render them detestable to both, they would soon study to obtain the one, and to avoid the other; would earnestly seek after *the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which, in the sight of God, is of great price*; and, above all, they would remember those two fine observations of *Solomon*, one in the xxixth ch. of his *Prov.* and the other in the xvi. ch. *A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit. Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.* And these proverbs I would recommend to all servants to bear about them, like jewels of inestimable value, and repeat them with their

prayers, as the surest charms, not only to preserve them in their places, but likewise keep them in favour both with GOD and man.

But there are two instances of encouragement, which I have not yet mentioned; and those are, the regard that should be had to the merits of a good servant in the last wills of the masters, and when the servant is past his labour.

As to the first of these: Forasmuch as the small pittance which is paid to servants under the name of wages, is, GOD knows, but a poor reward for fidelity and diligence; it is the duty of a master to remember a good servant in his last will; to make the best provision he can for him, against that time when it will be no longer in his power, either to reward his fidelity, or relieve his wants; and, therefore, I would have a dutiful and conscientious servant always considered in the next degree to a dutiful child, and before a child that was undutiful, agreeably to the wise man's rule, xvii. *Prov. 20. A wise servant shall bear rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance.*

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As to the second point; to wit, the regard due to a servant when he is past his labour: I think there cannot be a greater instance of cruelty and inhumanity, than to suffer an aged servant, who hath spent the vigour of his youth and health in our service, to be reduced to misery and want, when his infirmities have disabled him from further labour. Humanity would prompt us to take some care, even of a brute, in the same circumstances; for a brute, that had laboured out his strength in our service, that he might not want pasture and shelter for the poor remains of his life: and, surely, much more should it oblige us to take some care of our poor fellow-creatures, of an aged and a faithful servant, in the decline of life. Methinks I hear the old servant crying out to his master in this condition, as *David* doth to his God, in the lxxixth *Psal.* *Cast me not away in the time of age; forsake me not when my strength faileth me.*

The cases of sickness, or accidental loss of limbs, in our service, which disable from labour, fall also under this head, and are rather more calamitous than the case of old age, and, consequently, call at least for equal

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compassion and humanity at our hands; and, therefore, the cruelty of those masters is never to be forgiven, who make the misery and misfortunes of their servants, reasons for casting them off. With what face can such creatures cry out to GOD in their own calamity, as *David* doth in his distress, *Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate, and in misery? O go not far from me; for trouble is hard at hand, and there is none to help me.* Therefore, my beloved brethren, *be ye merciful, as your Father, which is in heaven, is merciful,* and fail not to shew all the pity and compassion to your poor servants, which you yourselves hope for, and will have need of, at the hand of GOD, your great Lord and Master.

And thus I have done with the several branches of the duty of masters to their servants; and have shewed, I hope, to your satisfaction, First, That you are to do justice to them in paying them their wages punctually and honestly, and not laying more labour upon them than they are able to bear.

Secondly, That you are to correct them in their faults; and that in such a manner, as is most likely to avail for their amendment, especially

especially such faults as are committed against the law of GOD; such as lying, swearing, profaneness, lewdness, and all vices and immoralities whatsoever: and this you must do, as well for their salvation-sake, as also to guard your children from the infection of their manners, who, if your servants are corrupt, will hardly escape being tainted by them.

Thirdly, I shewed you, that you were obliged to set your servants good examples, by honesty and conscience in all your dealings, and by an exemplary life of piety and virtue.

Fourthly, That you were to allow them proper means of instruction in their duty to GOD and man, the use of Bibles, and other books of devotion, and a proper portion of time to peruse them: the Sabbath, especially set apart for this end, is not only freely to be allowed them, but care is to be taken that it be employed by them in hearing sermons, and attending upon the public worship of GOD.

And, in the last place, as you are to correct your servants in vice and error, so are you to encourage them in well-doing; to
support

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support them when they are past their labour, and make the best provision you can for them at your death. And the consequence from all this will be, that your lives will be easier, and your business be infinitely better done, than otherwise they ever would, or ever will be.

And now, my brethren, if ye know all these parts of your duty, *happy are ye, if you do them.*

And, indeed, you ought to do them from the sole motive mentioned in my text, knowing, *that ye also have a Master in Heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.* The little temporary distinctions of lord and master are calculated only for this world; for, in the world to come, all titles shall vanish, and all distinctions cease, and mankind shall be reduced to their original equality: high and low, rich and poor, the master and the servant, all shall be summoned before the Great Tribunal of God; all shall appear alike, without precedence, and without distinction, other than what their merit shall give them in the sight of God; with regard to every thing else, equal, as in the grave they rose from.

Good

Good GOD! how strangely, how intirely, and how sadly, will the state of things here below be reversed and changed at the Great Day of account! when the mighty men of the earth shall be stript of all their ornaments and honours, and the title of *good and faithful servant*, shall be the highest and noblest distinction! Then shall the sons of vanity see themselves reduced to a level with their meanest slaves; and not only so, but shall see some of those slaves placed high above them. How will their proud hearts be mortified, to behold those poor wretches, wretches whom they would now scarce vouchsafe to look down upon, exalted to high degrees of honour and eminence, and themselves reduced to the lowest condition of misery and contempt! so low, that those very slaves shall pity them; so low, as, perhaps, to beg a small charity from the meanest of their creatures; as the rich man in the Gospel, who *was cloathed in purple, and fared sumptuously every day*, was reduced to beg relief by the hand of that wretched creature, whose sores *the dog licked at his gate*; to beg, *that Abraham would send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in cold water,*

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water, to cool his tongue. How many haughty masters will be reduced to the like sad estate at the Last Day; suing to their slaves, and suing, as he did, to be denied; and receiving, instead of relief, the same severe return, *Thou, in thy life-time, receivedst thy good things,* and this, thy slave, *evil things,* at thy hands; but *now he is comforted, and thou art tormented!*

Therefore, my beloved brethren, let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men, that wait for their lord. Oh, set not your hearts upon the little temporary distinctions of lord and master, but remember that *your Master is also in Heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.* Remember, that the meanest slave upon earth is upon the same foot of natural equality, and of equal acceptance, in the sight of GOD, with the mightiest monarch in the universe; all equally the sons of GOD, and heirs of everlasting salvation. What are all the wealth and power of this world, upon which we so vainly value ourselves? What are they but great stewardships, of which the owners shall give a severe account at the Last Day? What
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then is the great business of life, but to provide, that we may behave ourselves so in this account, that, at the last, we may be found in the character of that faithful and wise *steward* in the Gospel, *whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season. Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. But, if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink, and be drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware; and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.*

From which dreadful and intolerable doom, GOD, of his great mercy, deliver all that hear me; through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST, our only SAVIOUR.
Amen.

S E R M O N XII.

ROM. XIII. Part of ver. 8.

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.

THE Apostle, having in the foregoing verse enjoined us to render to every one their dues—*Tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, honour to whom honour*; subjoins as an enforcement of the same precept in other terms—*Owe no man any thing*. He first expresseth the precept positively; *Render to every one their dues*; and then, to enforce it yet stronger, he varies his phrase, and lays down the same precept a second time, in negative terms—*Owe no man any thing*—*Owe no man any thing, but to love one another*; *i. e.* discharge every engagement, every obligation you are under, to every man, in every relation of life: take care you owe no man any thing but love
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and good-will; for that is a debt, which, though you always pay, yet you will always owe; that is an obligation that never ends but with your life.

The precept here delivered is general, and extends to every instance of social virtue: but the business of this discourse shall be, to apply it to one particular duty, which is as little practised, and perhaps less taught, than any other; I mean the duty of paying debts: a duty of as great consequence to the well-being of society, as any other whatsoever; as comprehending under it one great and important branch of commutative justice; and yet as utterly and as openly disregarded, as if neither the laws of God, nor Man, nor Nature, exacted it of us. And therefore, to awaken you into a right sense of this duty, I shall consider the evils that attend the neglect of it, both as they regard the Debtor, and as they regard the Creditor.

And, first, with regard to the Debtor—Nothing is more manifest than that carelessness in contracting debts, and negligence in discharging them, is one of the most unhappy characters in life, and such as draws more evils after it, than can well be counted
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or conceived: that spirit, as it is the effect, so it is the cause of extravagance. Money borrowed is so much clear gains to a thoughtless mortal, that has nothing but the gratification of his pleasures at heart; and with how much more ease, and less interruption, this may be done, the better. The consequences of such a conduct, are reflections which can only proceed from that wisdom which they openly despise, or are utterly incapable of. This, of necessity, gives them up a prey to the artifices of wily villains, that lie in wait to deceive: for there are those in the world whose whole business and purpose of life is to watch and to feed the follies of such extravagants: they give by ounces, that they may receive by pounds. They are in the condition of the husbandman, who commits his seed to the earth, in prospect of a good harvest, greater, or less, according to the richness of the soil. They well know, that the persons they deal with, are bad computers, and worse accountants; and therefore nothing is more easy than to impose upon them in the value of what they vend, or the quantity of what they receive, And if they should at any time happen to

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be restive, and suspect they are defrauded, the men of the world know very well how to bring them down again to their own terms: they manage them, as skilful warriors subdue strong towns; they starve them into compliance: they know, it is but holding their hand, and refusing to feed their extravagance, to make them subscribe to any conditions they think fit to impose.

How far do these men outdo the folly of *Esau*? He sold his birth-right to gratify a real and craving want, and yet he sinned in selling it. But these men sacrifice theirs to such wants as are false and fantastic: to appetites that will not be satisfied, or at least ought not to be indulged: nay, they oftentimes sacrifice their health, as well as their inheritance, even to wantonness and fulness. The truth of it is, men of this character are, for the most part, in a worse condition than that of *Solomon's* horse-leech, that *bath two daughters, crying, Give, give*. Wine and women, play and pleasure, are the daughters of the horse-leech, less limited in their number, but not less craving, wasting, and insatiable; and whoever suffers them to fasten on him, is effectually undone. If men

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contracted debts for the necessities of life, which they could no otherwise procure, they were excusable; but to purchase needless, nay perhaps pernicious vanities, at the hazard of health, and fortune, and liberty; at the hazard of every thing that is good and valuable in life, is folly past forgiveness! And yet, if it were only a folly, it might be borne with: but in truth, this habit of running thoughtlessly into debt, draws many other worse habits after it: lying, swearing, cheating, and all kinds of vice and villainy, are its sure attendants; nay, sometimes, even murder, and an open defiance of publick justice, as hath been seen in more than one unhappy and dreadful instance. It is like that evil spirit in the Gospel, who when he hath gotten possession, taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there; *and the last state of that man is unspeakably worse than the first.*

A spirit of extravagance, long used to be indulged, cannot bear to be restrained, or refused: and if it may not be gratified in the usual way, yet gratified it must be at any rate. If credit be checked in the com-

mon course, new chanel's must be cut, and new sources opened : and this must be the work of falshood and fraud, and every wicked artifice that can be devised. By this means the mind becomes corrupt and depraved to the last degree ; and the man is gradually fitted for the conversation of fiends. Nay, this sin is as stupid with regard to this world, as other sins are with regard to the next : it sacrifices all the solid and lasting satisfactions even of this life, to small, present, momentary gratifications, without the least thought of the dreadful consequences that await them ; and it ends, even in this world, as other vices do in the next, in the loss of liberty and happiness, and the calamities of a dreadful confinement among cursed spirits ; — for a gaol is, indeed, another Hell upon earth, and the best emblem of that mansion of misery ; where you are surrounded with nothing but sin and affliction, where abandoned wretches become yet more abandoned by society and example ; by the conversation of miscreants more vile than themselves ; by mixing with the most corrupt and profligate part of mankind ; inflaming their past guilt by new and greater

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enormities every day; living in utter defiance of GOD and goodness; and, for the most part, dying either in a hardened impenitence, or the horrors of despair. And yet this is the end to which the young, the gay, the pleasurable part of mankind are hurrying on, with as much eagerness, as if they thought it impossible ever to be attained too soon. And indeed, if this were only the pursuit of youthful folly, the evil were in some degree to be endured, because age and experience would be sure to abate it; but, in truth, it is often the vice of every age, and every condition in life — where-ever pride and vanity reign, there extravagant aims are pursued, and fantastic distinctions sought after, at the hazard of every felicity and security in life. Turn your eyes upon the world, and you will behold one half of mankind living apparently above their fortune; and what is living above their fortune, but living to sure destruction, both of themselves and family, as well as all those they deal with? One man is above making use of the limbs which GOD hath bestowed upon him, to convey him where his business calls; and so rides in a coach, for a few months, at the hazard of

wanting shoes for the rest of his life, when his folly hath reduced him to his feet.

Another, who hath wherewithal to purchase a house, every way convenient, and suited to his circumstances, cannot be content without magnificence, and rooms of state, which are of no use, but to be looked at : these are not to be attained without a foreign fund ; and, just when the building is at the point of being finished, his creditors come and take possession of it, and he and his family are turned out of doors — and, perhaps, without cloaths enough to cover their nakedness, or hide their shame ; it may be too, without knowing how to be sheltered from the inclemency of the weather, or where to seek for a morsel of bread. This is oftener the case, in effect, though not exactly in the circumstances now mentioned, than is commonly imagined ; nor are the instances few, or rare, of persons utterly undone by living beyond their fortune. In this condition, abandoned at once by their friends, and by the fund or income by which they subsisted, deserted by every thing but their pride, Whither shall the unhappy wretches turn themselves? Their vanity sets them

them above all honest industry in a low way; for that, for the most part, remains with them, like a running sore, that drains their vitals; and either urges them to starve, in an honourable way, or drives them to violent and desperate courses for subsistence, till they end in infamy. And although such a creature is little to be pitied upon his own account, yet is his fall often to be lamented, on account of many others, that are involved in his ruin: an honest friend, that was drawn in to be bound for him, and is undone by his beneficence; or an innocent family, that were too young to be partners in his folly, and yet must share his fate, and are given up by it to prostitution or poverty; or an honest and kind parent, who expended more than he could well afford, to bring his son to more advantage into the world; perhaps, too, a virtuous, and a valuable woman, innocent of his pride, and yet crushed in his fall; tho', it is to be hoped, this rarely happens, the wife being too often the great incentive to the husband's vanity, and, of consequence, less to be lamented in the ruin in which she is involved. These, and a thousand such-like calamities, are the necessary and unavoidable

consequences of profusion and extravagance, of carelessness in contracting debts, and negligence in discharging them: these are the evils which thoughtless mortals draw upon their own heads, and those of their nearest friends, by vanity and unthrift. And yet, great and various as these are, they are few and inconsiderable, in comparison of those brought upon the rest of mankind by the same cursed spirit.

Every one knows, that the whole business of trade, by which nations grow great and happy, is carried on by men of diligence and industry, of fortunes, for the most part, too small (at least, at their first setting out) to support them in indolence; and that their profit arises principally from quick returns. It is plain from hence, that running in debt with tradesmen, and neglecting to pay them in due time, is utterly ruinous to the whole business of trade and commerce, and absolutely destructive of the very principles upon which it is built, and by which it subsists: and yet this is a crime every day committed by men of fortune and quality, with as little remorse as they eat and drink; and, if the tradesman demands his money, it is odds
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but he is either threatened, or turned into a jest: The son of *Sirack's* wife observation is here every day verified; *The rich man hath done wrong, and yet he threateneth; the poor is wronged, and yet he must intreat also.* If threats will not rid these men of their importunate creditors, then are they to be deluded with fair words, and plausible excuses, to pay attendance, from day to day, to the loss of more time, and neglect of more business, than perhaps the debt is worth: and so the first injury, instead of being repaired, is doubled. And yet the gentleman debtor, the author of this evil, is so far from repenting of it, that it is odds but he vaunts his wit and dexterity in doing it — *As a mad man* (saith *Solomon*) *who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death; so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am I not in jest?* — And, indeed, it is scarce to be conceived, how any man can deal more destruction and ruin around him, than by deceiving and breaking faith with the fair trader; for it is well known, his credit, his whole subsistence, depends upon keeping his word, and being strictly punctual in his payments, and his promises; and, if he fail
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in these, he is undone at once. And how is it possible he should not fail, if the gentlemen he deals with fail him? He hath no way of raising money, but by sale of his goods; and if those, to whom they are trusted, will not pay him, it is impossible he can pay his creditors; and, if he do not pay them, it is impossible but he must be ruined, and, perhaps, many more with him. For traders are linked and dependent of one another; and one man's fall throws down many more with him; the shop-keeper is in debt to the maker, or the merchant; and these again to the journeyman, the farmer, or the foreign correspondent; and so the ruin becomes complicated, and extended beyond imagination; insomuch that the failure of one man here may affect many others in the remotest regions of the earth; may reach at once from west to east, and from east to west again; and yet the fine gentleman, that thus *scattereth firebrands, arrows, and death, around him*, shall cry, with great complacency to himself, and, perhaps, with great applause from his companions, *Am I not in jest?* shall pride himself in having imposed upon the credulity of an industrious honest man,

man, (with the added insolence of a contemptuous name) and appointed him to come for payment the next day after he is gone out of town. And, after all, to what purpose all this fraud, and falsehood, and delusion! none in nature, but to have wherewithal to feed their folly and extravagance; to have to throw away upon a horse, or an harlot; or to pay a play debt — debts of honour, as they are called, but, in truth, debts of infamy; debts, which it was infamous to contract, and which it is villainous to pay, to the injury of the honest trader. A gamester, a sharper, that undoes you with false dice, or sleight of hand; a wretch, whom it is a scandal to converse, or so much as to be seen with, such a miscreant shall be paid off, though to your utter ruin: every engagement, every security in life, shall be sacrificed to discharge him; whilst the fair dealer, that supplied you with the necessaries of life, is left to rot in a gaol, for the food that fed you, and the cloaths that covered you. Can any thing be conceived more monstrous? or is it possible to imagine, how human nature can be sunk into a greater degree of corruption than this?

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These are the practices of the loose and libertine part of mankind : and, indeed, what better can be expected from that vicious and thoughtless extravagance in which they live? But there is also another race of men, opposite to these in all other respects, who agree perfectly with them, in not paying their debts, and yet are much more criminal on that score :--- I mean, the needy and covetous rich; who cannot pay, either because they have made a new purchase, or because they will not break a sum for which they receive interest. A greedy purchaser is one that will run in debt with all mankind; and, if he can help it, will pay for nothing but houses or lands; nay, by his good will, he will not pay for these, otherwise than by the profits that arise from them. The thoughtless libertine is a man that spends more than he hath, and therefore cannot pay : the greedy purchaser is a man that spends nothing, and hath a great deal, and will not pay, because he would have more. These are the greatest monsters in nature, compositions of covetousness and cruelty; who oppress and distress every one they have to deal with; who will pay no man themselves, and yet suffer no mortal to
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owe them a peny : they rack their tenants, and grind the face of the poor; *they drive away the asfs of the fatherless; faith Job, and take the widow's ox for a pledge; — they cause the naked to lodge without cloathing, and they have no covering in the cold; they are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for shelter; men groan from out the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out.* These men are the pest of society, and infinitely worse than robbers upon the high roads; they rob, not from necessity, but from the insolence of power and plenty! in the spirit of calm cruelty, and determined villainy! and, to complete their character, they rob oftentimes even under the shew of friendship, with impunity, and without remorse: — neither can you guard against them; neither can you bring them to justice, when you are injured. And here the condition of the creditor is indeed deplorable: if the tradesman be importunate for his money, he is sure to disoblige: if it be kept from him for a considerable time, he must of necessity be a great loser; because he is deprived of the advantage of turning it in trade all that while.

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Whereas, if it had been paid him when it ought, he might reasonably hope to have doubled it before that day. And yet, as the case now stands, he has not the advantage of receiving so much as the common interest for it : nay, not only so, but if he lets it lie above a certain number of years, he loses the principal. It is to be presumed, that one reason why the law allows no interest for book-debts is, because the trader cannot afford to let his money lie out so long as to derive any advantage from it by way of interest; for the interest of money is but a trifle, in comparison of the advantages it may turn to in trade ; and therefore the law, to lay tradesmen under a necessity of calling in their money betimes, allows them no interest for it, while it is out. But still the difficulty remains, how to call it in ; since every one knows, that the expences of a law-suit may very easily exceed the debt : and at best, you must of necessity be a loser, even by gaining your cause. If indeed the law, at the same time that it prohibited book-debts from bearing interest, had contrived some cheap and easy method of recovering those debts, tradesmen had been well dealt by : but to take away the
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the interest of their debts, and the principal, after some years, and yet leave them no way of doing themselves justice, but at the hazard of their ruin, hath the appearance of great hardship. For, besides the excessive expence of law-suits, the ill-will that such an attempt is sure to draw upon the tradesman, is a weight which few men of that rank are able to bear. The man he goes to law with, and all his friends and dependents, are sure to become his mortal enemies, from that moment. The debtor, in that case, seems to think himself obliged to abuse the tradesman, and blast his credit as much as in him lies, to justify himself in using him so ill; and blasting a tradesman's credit, is the sure way to ruin him at once. It is finely observed of an excellent writer, That credit is to the tradesman, what honour is to the gentleman: to a man that is truly such, his honour is as dear as his life: to the trader, credit is as life itself; for he cannot live without it. Few of you would knowingly and deliberately involve yourselves in the guilt of murder; and yet you effectually do this, when you blast the reputation of an honest dealer: for defamiation

famation is death to such a one: his bread depends upon his credit, and if he be robbed of it, he must starve; and certainly, stabbing a man to the heart, is a much less cruelty, than starving him to death. Nay, you are as cruel to your own honour in this case, as you are to the tradesman's credit and life: for honour is a strict and nice regard to every virtue in life, and more particularly to truth and justice. And therefore a man of honour, that is neither true nor honest, is a contradiction in terms: a man that allows himself in any degree of fraud or falshood, has actually degraded himself from his dignity, and has no more title to the honour, than he has to the estate he has forfeited.

But, suppose the tradesman's reputation so well established as to bear up against the load of calumny that is thrown upon him on these occasions: suppose him able to bear the double burden of calumny, and a law-suit: yet what will all this avail him? The debtor is a peer, or a parliament-man, or protected by those that are: his person is privileged, and his estate settled. And if neither of these will do, he bids defiance to the very execution of the law; and you attempt it at the
hazard

hazard of your life. These are the difficulties that shopkeepers and men in business are forced to struggle with, and too often sink under: and if, in the number of so many bad paymasters as they have to deal with, some should be so far touched with compassion, or remorse, as not only to discharge what they owe, but likewise to pay interest for it, beyond the obligation of the law, this is reckoned an uncommon mark of liberality and christian heroism; whereas, in truth, a dealer that is kept out of his money a considerable time, hath no sufficient reparation made him by being paid both the principal and the interest, in the end; because both together will be far from amounting to the profit he might reasonably propose to have made by it in trade, all that time. For sure no man in his wits would run all the hazards and troubles of trade, who could propose to make as much advantage by the common interest of money, as he might expect from dealing with it. And this is a new reason, why men should be careful to pay tradesmen in time; because though no accident should hinder you from paying them in the end, yet your clearing off the original debt, together

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with the legal interest which a sum ought to bear, is far from doing justice to the tradesman, for the damage he has suffered, in being kept out of his money so long. So that, when you think you have made him ample amends for detaining what was due to him, you have in truth injured him.

And thus I have endeavoured to lay before you the several evils that arise from running thoughtlessly into debt, and from delaying to pay when it is in our power. And yet this is a vice so universally practised, and so little thought of in the world, that I cannot quit the subject without making some application of what has been said, to all orders and degrees of men that allow themselves in it.

SERMON

S E R M O N XIII.

ROM. XIII. Part of ver. 8.

Owe no man any thing but to love one another.

IN a former discourse upon these words, I laid down the duty of paying debts, together with the evils which attend the neglect of it, both as they regard the debtor, and as they regard the creditor. The evils to the debtor, of being imposed upon either in the quantity or value of what they take up upon trust; and the great evil of making expence easy, and in consequence of that, ruin insensible, and inevitable. To the creditor, the delay of payment in due time, draws endless inconveniencies and evils after it; loss of time, and trade, and credit, and in consequence of these, inevitable, and, it may be, extensive and complicated ruin. I now proceed to make some application of what has been said to all orders and degrees of men,

that allow themselves in the violation or neglect of this duty. And, first, Let me ask the thoughtless spendthrift once again, What can be the consequence of his running in debt with all the world, but utter ruin both to himself and others?—If the persons you deal with are honest and indigent, how can you answer it to your humanity, to bring misery and destruction upon the most pitiable and most deserving part of the creation? To destroy those by your extravagance, which even cruelty and tyranny would be tender of? What is most provoking, and indeed insufferable upon this head, is, that those who allow themselves in this conduct, often pass upon the world under the character of good-natured men; and you shall often hear it said of such a one, That he is no-body's enemy, but his own. But the real truth is, that every vicious man, whatever he may be in his intentions, is in effect an enemy to the society he lives in; and more particularly a vicious good-nature is one of the cruellest characters in life. It is kind only where it ought not: it is kind to every vice and every villainy: it is indulgent to every thing but honesty and innocence; and those it is sure to

to sacrifice where-ever it comes. A good-natured villain will surfeit a sot, and gorge a glutton; nay, will glut his horses and his hounds with that food, for which the venders are one day to starve to death in a dungeon: a good-natured monster will be gay in the spoils of widows and orphans. Good-nature separated from virtue, is absolutely the worst quality and character in life; at least if this be good-nature, to feed a dog, and to murder a man— And therefore, if you have any pretence to good-nature, pay your debts; and in so doing cloathe those poor families that are now in rags for your finery: feed him that is starving for the bread you eat; and redeem him from misery that rots in gaol, for the dainties on which you *fared deliciously every day*—And besides the good you will do to others by those acts of honesty, you will do infinite good to yourselves by them. Paying of debts is, next to the Grace of God, the best means in the world to deliver you from a thousand temptations to sin and vanity. Pay your debts, and you will not have wherewithal to purchase a costly toy or a pernicious pleasure—Pay your debts, and you will not

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have what to lose to a villainous gamester. Pay your debts, and you will not have wherewithal to feed a number of useless horses, or infectious harlots. In one word, Pay your debts, and you will of necessity *abstain from many fleshly lusts that war against the spirit, and bring you into captivity to sin*, and cannot fail to end in your utter destruction, both of soul and body.

On the other hand, if the men you deal with, and are indebted to, are rich and wily, consider they supply your extravagance with no other view but to undo you; as men pour water into a pump, to draw more from it. Consider, they could not afford to trust you, if they did not propose to make excessive gain by you: and if you think at all, think what it is to lose a fortune by folly; to purchase superfluous and pernicious vanities, for a short season, at the hazard of wanting necessaries for the tedious remainder of a mis-spent life. Time, which sweetens all other afflictions, will perpetually sharpen and inflame this: as the gayety and giddiness of youth go off, the wants of age will become more sharp and more inconsolable to the last day of your lives; and severe reflection

tion will double every calamity that befalls you. And therefore the son of *Sirach* well advises, *Ecclus. xviii. ver. 33. Be not made a beggar by banqueting upon borrowing; for thou shalt lie in wait for thy own life.*—

And again, the same wise man most excellently observes, *That he that buildeth his house with other mens money, is like one that gathereth himself stones for the tomb of his burial*: He erects a sure monument, not only of his folly, but of his ruin: and the consequence is the same from extravagance of every kind, but with this difference, that the ruin derived from wine and women, is the most dreadful of all others; as it involves you at once in the double distress of disease and want. Who amongst you can at once bear the united racks of hunger, and infection, and an evil conscience? And yet this is what you must feel, altho' it be what you cannot bear, the torments of Hell anticipated! To be deprived of every blessing, and to be immersed in misery.

Thus much for the youthful Extravagant. In the next place, let me apply myself to the Man of Quality, that is guilty of this vice, altho' these are too often the same persons.

If ye will not consider what ye owe your creditors, and how to pay them, I beseech you calmly to reflect and consider, what ye owe to Yourself, to your Family, to your Country, to your King. Was it for this, that ye were distinguished above others of the same rank, only to be more eminent in infamy? Was Nobility bestowed upon your ancestors as a reward of virtue; and do ye use it only as a privilege for vice? Is superior Worth degenerated into superior villainy? If ye had any remains of modesty, ye would renounce the titles and the fortunes of your ancestors, with the virtues that attained them. Ye would blush to take place of a beggar, that had virtue. Will ye yet pretend to be better men than others? when ye have renounced your humanity; when ye are no longer men, but monsters.—It is not expected of you, that you should perform acts of heroism and generosity; that you should reward virtue, and support merit in distress. Alas! these expectations are long since vanished, and seem only the boasts of fabulous antiquity. But methinks it might still be expected of you, that you should do common justice: that you should not be worse than
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the rest of mankind, because you think yourselves better; at least expect to be called so, and treated as such. Surely it might still be expected of you, that you should pay your debts, and keep your promises: and, in truth, ye would not be void, either of dignity or dependents, if ye did even this. Mankind are already too much prejudiced in your favour, and would not fail to pay you sufficient regard and reverence, even if you did them no good, provided you did them no mischief. But if ye expect to be esteemed, not only without generosity, but even without justice; ye are indeed unreasonable, and will be sure to be disappointed.

In the next place, Let me apply myself to the Wealthy and Covetous: these are of all others the most inexcusable in not paying their debts. Men that have made or improved their own fortune by industry, are utterly unpardonable in oppressing the industry of others: the least that might be expected from increase of wealth, is to do justice with our abundance. This was the express direction of the prophet *Elisha* in the ivth ch. of 2 *Kings*: when he had miraculously increased the widow's oil, he commanded

manded her first to pay her debts out of her abundance—*Go, saith he, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.* And the reason of this is evident; the money we owe is not ours; it is the property of other men, in our keeping; and we have no more right to it, than we have to the money in their pockets. And although we should make no return to God for his blessings upon our industry, in alms and acts of goodness; surely the least we can do, is to do justice to men. What a dreadful reflection is it, to turn the blessings of Providence into a curse to ourselves, and all we have to deal with! Men of this character are in the condition of those malignant insects, who fret and make sores where-ever they come, and then feed upon them: they thrive upon the miseries of mankind; which is absolutely the most detestable character upon earth! and is, next to that of a fiend, the very worst and vilest that can be imagined: *Woe unto him, saith the Prophet Jeremiah, That buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong! Jer. xxii. 13. Woe unto them, saith Isaiah (ch. v. ver. 8.) that join house to house, that lay*

lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth! Living in that character of cruelty which is best suited to a beast of prey; that scatters ruin and desolation all around him. One would think the Apostle's precept were reversed to these men; and that they thought themselves bound in conscience to owe every man every thing in the world but love and good-will. And after all, to what purpose is all this oppression, and iniquity of avarice? To heap up ill-got riches for a curse upon themselves and their posterity, and leave a memory and a carcase equally odious and offensive behind them. *They are exalted for a little while*, as it is finely expressed in the xxiiid chapter of *Job*, *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone, and brought low: they are taken out of the way as all other; and cut off, as the tops of the ears of corn.* They are permitted, by the Divine Providence, to fill up at once the measure of their wealth and their iniquity; and as soon as ever they are ripe for ruin, they are cut off in the fulness of their pride and fortune: and the wealth they have hoarded, is like the full ear of corn;

corn; which, instead of being gathered into the barn, is trampled under foot, and scattered over the face of the earth; and so becomes a prey to rooks, and swine, and vermin.

In the last place, Let me apply myself to Traders themselves; and desire them to reflect how they pay their own debts: I am afraid, some of them very badly. I have heard of a most wicked practice amongst them, of paying their journeymen and underlings in goods: I call this, Wicked, because if those goods are rated at the shop-price, the journeyman is plainly defrauded; since he hath no allowance for the time and trouble he must take, and the hazard he must run in vending those goods. And whereas he had a right to ready money for his labour, his necessities now oblige him to sell those goods at any price he can get, to the discredit of trade in general, and the real injury of that very person, who laid him under a necessity of so doing; who must of necessity suffer by having his goods sold at an under-rate: so that this practice is as ill-judged in the shop-keeper, and as weak with regard to his own interest, as it is wicked with regard to his
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poor underling. And indeed all bad payment to those they have to deal with, especially the poorer sort, is manifestly injurious to men in business: for the clamour of bad pay, and the discredit that necessarily attends it, generally speaking, begins there. And therefore *Solomon's* precepts, in *Prov.* iii. 27, 28. ought always to be strictly observed by them, of all mankind—*With-hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee.* Altho' the men you deal with do not know your wants, nor consider your labour, and loss of time in seeking your due; and are consequently regardless of you and your necessities; yet you well know the wants of the poor people *you* deal with, and the injury you do them, in making them lose their time in attending upon you; and therefore you are utterly inexcusable in not relieving them from those hardships, when you can do so, barely by doing justice. How can you expect a blessing from *GOD* upon your own endeavours, when you are guilty of so much cruelty and injustice to others; when

when you are guilty of so much injustice to the very men by whose labour ye are supported? *A poor man that oppresseth the poor, (saith Solomon) is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food, Prov. xxviii. 3.* Nature hath formed us to compassionate the calamities we endure; and therefore a poor man should as naturally expect aid and consolation from his brethren in the same condition, as the parched and impoverished Earth expects relief from the showers of Heaven: consequently, when instead of being aided, he is oppressed by his brethren, and the little remains of his substance are torn from him, he is then in the condition of the earth, ravaged and ruined by the very means appointed by Providence to refresh and make it fruitful; and all its seed, all the means and hopes of a future harvest, swept away with its best mould. *A poor man, that oppresseth the poor, is the cruellest monster in nature; and it is the just judgment of Almighty God, that with what measure you mete, it should be measured unto you again. He that doth wrong, saith the Apostle, Col. iii. 25. shall receive for the wrong that he hath done; as he hath done,*

done, it shall be done unto him ; his reward shall return upon his own head.

And therefore, my Brethren, as ye expect mercy, and protection, and blessing from God, do justice and judgment to all you have to deal with ; and *be merciful after your power : for the righteous Lord loveth righteousness ; and whatsoever good any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.*—So that a man shall say, *Verily, there is a reward for the righteous ; Verily, there is a GOD that judgeth the earth.*

14 NO 63

THE
DUTY *of* RULERS
TO THEIR
SUBJECTS.

Preached before his Excellency JOHN Lord
CARTERETT, Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland*,
in the *Castle-Chapel, Dublin.*

THE
DUTY of RULERS
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S E R M O N XIV.

ROM. XIII. 3, 4.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

For he is the minister of GOD to thee for good. But if thou doest that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of GOD, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.

IN these words St. Paul layeth down the duty and character of a good Ruler; and the sum of what he saith is this.

First, That all Rulers are the Ministers of GOD.

Secondly, That they are appointed by Him for the good of Mankind. And,

Thirdly, As a consequence from this, that the duty of their station is to encourage and reward righteousness, and punish iniquity.

And, First, Rulers are the Ministers of God.

Whoever considereth the great wisdom and goodness of God in the creation of the world, will find all the parts of it most admirably disposed, and perfectly fitted for the good and happiness of all his creatures. And whereas all the other creatures were formed for the use of man, and answer that end in proportion to their health and strength; therefore man is not only indebted to God for the immediate excellence of his own constitution, but also for the strength and health of the inferior creatures made subservient to him. But forasmuch as this health and strength of the creatures would be of no use to mankind, without the advantage of their own mutual aid, (because they could not singly subdue them to their service) or if they were, would constitute but a small part of their happiness, compared with the blessings of society; therefore God Almighty, in willing the happiness

ness of his creatures, principally willed their living in society, and in a friendly intercourse of social virtue.

And forasmuch as man is not only fitted to advantage his fellow-creatures in society, but likewise to disquiet and annoy them; and is, from the variety and violence of his passions, too often tempted so to do; therefore God, in willing the happiness of mankind in society, must necessarily be supposed to will the restraint of such unruly passions, as would, if unrestrained, inevitably overthrow and destroy all that happiness: for he that willeth the end, must always be supposed to will all honest and proper means necessary to that end.

Now forasmuch as the passions and perverse humours of men are no otherwise to be restrained but by establishing a coercive power over them; that is, by vesting an authority in some one or more persons, to correct and repress the enormity of such passions and inclinations; therefore it was necessary to the well-being of society, that God Almighty should vest some persons with authority and power, to restrain the

unruly wills and passions of men, by proper degrees of punishment and terror.

From hence it appeareth, that all government and authority of men over others in society, is from God, and that all rulers are his ministers; agreeably to those passages in Scripture, where God is called *King of kings*, and *Lord of lords*, and, *the only Potentate*; plainly implying, that God hath the same rule and authority over all supreme earthly powers, that they have over their inferior ministers: and, consequently, as inferior ministers are by the appointment of those in authority over them; kings, and princes, and rulers, of all denominations, are by the appointment of Almighty God, and are, in the words of the Apostle—*the ministers of God*—which was the first thing to be proved.

The next proposition laid down from the text, is this, That all Rulers are appointed by God for the good of Mankind. And altho' this be a plain consequence from their being *the ministers of God*, who always willeth the happiness and well-being of his creatures; yet will it not be amiss to illustrate

strate this point a little more clearly and fully.

The duty of doing good is so plainly at once the instinct of nature, and dictate of reason, as well as the direction of religion, that moralists are now perfectly agreed in it; and vouch with one voice, that love and benevolence are the fundamental principles that should govern and conduct our lives; and that all the laws of nature, as far as they respect society, are reducible to this one; *viz.* That every man living do all possible good offices to every other, as far as in him lieth.

And as this duty is of universal extent, because every man living is in some sort fitted for it, so is it more eminently incumbent upon those whom God hath blessed with greater abilities, and better opportunities, for the discharge of it. Hence it is, that we find the charge of doing good more particularly directed to the rich: *Charge them that are rich in this world* (saith the Apostle) *that they do good; that they be rich in good works.* And forasmuch as men in authority, and high station, have, from the nature and condition of those stations, greater measures of wealth and affluence devolved upon

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them,

them, proportioned to their power; therefore the charge to the rich more eminently respecteth the great and powerful of mankind.

Add to this, that they can do ten thousand good offices at a much cheaper and easier rate than others. They can often do good without any expence, and almost without any trouble, merely from the influence of their power and their example.

And as they are more able to do good than other men, so are they also more obliged: it is their immediate and direct duty; and they are supported by the publick for these very ends: for the administration of justice, and every other virtue that respecteth the well-being of society: for, *For this cause pay you tribute also* (saith the Apostle); *for they are GOD's ministers, attending continually on this very thing.*

All conditions of life are honourable in proportion to their usefulness to mankind; and for this reason governors are more honourable than other men, because good governors are more useful; are benefactors to greater numbers of mankind. It is this single consideration that intitleth them to
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higher degrees of veneration and observance. And indeed it would be ill consistent either with the wisdom or goodness of God, to bestow such distinguishing advantages upon the governors of mankind, for any lower or less worthy purposes. To imagine, that God sendeth great men into the world, like the *Leviathan* into the sea, to sport and take their pastime therein; to abuse their power and affluence to tyranny and oppression, to luxury and excess, and to the lawless gratification of their unruly appetites and passions; were equally impious and absurd.

Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant, that thou canst do mischief, whereas the goodness of God endureth yet daily? This is the justest reproach upon tyranny, that ever was penned. The business of a good ruler is to imitate the goodness and the justice of God. A tyrant reverseth this noble character, and employeth all that power to the vilest and the worst ends, which were given him by Almighty God for the noblest and the best.

And therefore the great and distinguishing advantage that men derive from their superior power, and honour, and affluence,

is in reality this, and this only; That their abilities to do good are enlarged; that now their power beareth some proportion to the benevolence of a good mind; their high station enableth them to see, and to relieve, the necessities of all around them. A great and God-like advantage!

When GOD exalteth one man above another, it is for the same reason that he exalteth the mountains above the level lands. Great men are the rising grounds; they are the eminences of the earth, which more immediately, and in greater abundance, receive the dew of Heaven: but then let them remember, they receive it, not to retain it all to themselves, but rather to convey it thence to more advantage, to refresh the humble valleys, and the indigent earth beneath them.

But farther—Rulers are not only to do good by the exercise of their power; but also by the influence of their example.

The whole world is swayed by example; and is either reformed, or ruined by it, according as it is good, or evil. Families naturally fall into an imitation of their Fathers: armies are swayed by the example of their
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Captains; and nations by the example of their Governors. *Regis ad exemplum*, is an old and known observation: their practice is a silent precept, and oftentimes more powerful than their avowed and open commands; and for this plain reason, Their public orders are often the directions of policy, and sometimes very opposite to their private inclinations; and therefore a prudent man will not always care to be too strict and rigid an observer of them; because he well knoweth, such an officiousness may be fatal to him: but their example is a sure guide; what they practise, they certainly approve of, otherwise they would not do it; *for who will say unto them, What doest thou?* And as their example is of great importance in every instance that respecteth the peace and well-being of society, it is, for that reason, of the last consequence in the concerns of religion, upon which the peace and well-being of society so mainly and so evidently depend: insomuch that they who have been hardy enough to disclaim the advantages of religion upon other accounts, have not scrupled to subscribe to them upon this: and therefore the care of religion hath always

ways been accounted a principal and most important duty of governors, by all that have ever treated that subject with any tolerable mastery. And forasmuch as all religion dependeth upon the regularity, the purity, and excellence of the publick worship of GOD; and these again, upon the administration of an orderly, a learned, and religious ministry; neither swelled with arrogance, from excess, nor sunk to servility and ignorance, from penury; the support of such a ministry in their temporal, their civil, their legal, their religious, their divine, their immemorial, their necessary rights, I will venture to say, is the noblest and most beneficent office of the noblest and most beneficent employment under Heaven. And if this be true with respect to rulers in general, it is certainly more peculiarly so, with regard to those rulers and their representatives, whom the Providence of GOD hath placed at the head of the purest christian Church; and who pride themselves upon the glorious and distinguishing titles of *Defenders of the Faith*. And that it is strictly true of all Rulers upon earth, needs little sagacity to discern, or ingenuity to acknowledge; forasmuch as a very moderate

moderate portion of humility and good understanding will enable the mightiest of mortals to see the manifest, the necessary dependence of all human affairs, upon the council and direction of his all-wise and powerful Providence, *who visiteth the earth, and bleffeth it, and maketh it plenteous: who putteth down one, and setteth up another; and at his pleasure poureth contempt upon princes! Who commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealet up the stars: who alone stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the madness of the people.*

And thus much in proof of the second proposition laid down from my text; that rulers are appointed by God, for the good of mankind.

I proceed to the consequence deduced from this proposition; *viz.* That the duty of their station is to encourage and reward Righteousness, and punish Iniquity.

And first, It is the duty of a good governor, to encourage and reward Righteousness; that is, every thing that is virtuous and praise-worthy in life: they should regard that precept of the Prophet, as peculiarly directed

rected to them, *Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him.*

Such is the nature of man, that he doth not only need to be with-held from doing evil, but to be encouraged to do well. For as he is a being capable of doing much mischief to his fellows in society, so is he likewise as capable of doing great good, altho' not always so rightly inclined: and therefore one great duty and end of government is, to cultivate the good dispositions of men, and invite them, by proper rewards, to exert the beneficence of their nature to the glory of God, and the good of their species. And this is surely a great and a God-like employment! It is here, that rulers are indeed the ministers of God, when they are employed in promoting virtue, and piety, and the arts of life; in diffusing peace, and joy, and happiness, all around them! And as this is a duty they owe to God and the world, it is also a duty which their own nearest interest exacteth from them; forasmuch as the felicity of the ruler is inseparable from that of the people committed to his care; and must eternally rise and fall with it. Besides, that such an employment as this, enlargeth a
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man's capacity of happiness : for no man is as happy as he might be, that hath not the power and the pleasure of making others so. And this single consideration demonstrates God to be the happiest of Beings, merely because he is the best : and so, after him, they that are next in goodness, must be next also in beatitude.

From hence it followeth, that the condition of a wise and a good governor, presiding over a peaceful, a dutiful, and a well-disposed people, is the happiest condition of mortality. And on the other hand, such a people have a just title to happiness under such a ruler ; and to be protected in all their religious and civil rights ; for that is the reason and end of his authority. Nor is the character of any people, in point of duty and loyalty, to be impeached by any supposed misconduct of particular persons in particular points, either of doubtful or difficult determination, or where a strong bias of interest may too easily mislead men, otherwise honest, dutiful, and loyal.

Nay, every single subject of that character hath a right to all those advantages, at the hands of his governor, to which his merits intitle

intitle him: for *he that ruleth over men, should be just, ruling in the fear of God.* This, *David* assureth us, was the direction he himself received from the mouth of God, *2 Sam. xxiii. 3. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God;* and justice, we know, giveth every one his due. Nay, this is a claim which the ruler's own felicity will exact from him, as well as his virtue and wisdom. He will be solicitous to search out and to reward virtue and merit of every kind; not only because it is his duty, but because it is one of the noblest and happiest employments that a good mind can be engaged in; and because the well-being of the community (which is inseparable from his own) is greatly concerned in so doing.

It is a denunciation of uncommon calamity, when God pronounceth upon his people, by the prophet *Isaiah*, that *he will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.* And whether rulers are so in years, in understanding, or in neglect of their duty, the calamity is equal. and one apparent reason why it is so, (besides their
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their seeing, and hearing, and acting by other mens organs) is, because in that condition they are incapable of discerning the merits of men, and giving them their due rewards and distinctions, upon which the national felicity, glory, and interest, will eternally depend.

It is related of *Agésilas*, that he bore the faults of private persons with great gentleness, as being of little consequence; but those of princes he considered as of mighty moment: particularly sloth and negligence he regarded as most unbecoming that character, to which, in his judgment, appertained the practice of every thing that was beautiful and beneficent.

When the righteous are in authority (saith Solomon) the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn. And it is surely a circumstance of uncommon felicity, when the Providence of God placeth a wise and a righteous ruler at the head of power: for who so able to sustain that high character with dignity to himself, and felicity to mankind, as one whose mind is improved and enlarged, is conducted and confirmed by principles of

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right reason, religion, and virtue? as one whose innate dignity setteth him above servile or selfish views; above mean and mercenary measures? as one whose integrity of heart will take no bias from partiality, party, or sycophant calumny; disdaining every influence but those of truth, honour, and conscious virtue?

But farther, A good ruler is not only to encourage and reward Righteousness, but also to discountenance Demerit, and punish Iniquity.

A wise governor well knoweth, that every advantage, every undue distinction, bestowed upon a worthless, a wicked, or unmeriting man, is so much placed to the score of his ignorance, or iniquity, that bestowed it; and therefore he, of all others, will be solicitous to support that part of a righteous man's character, in *Psal. xv.* — *in whose eyes a vile person is contemned.* And as he will be careful in this point for his own honour, so likewise for his people's happiness: *The ungodly, saith the Psalmist, walk on every side; when they are exalted, the children of men are put to rebuke.* The worst men are sometimes the best courtiers;
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dextrous in their address, and equally supple and subtile in their solicitations: but when they succeed, the publick suffereth; when they are exalted, *the children of men are put to rebuke*; and therefore a good ruler will be careful not to exalt any such.

But this is not all—He must not only discountenance iniquity; but he must punish it. And altho' the business of punishment be the duty, of all others, least agreeable to a good and humane disposition, yet must it be executed, and that too, with due severity: such a severity, as may make the pain of offending against the peace of society always exceed any pleasure, or profit, or advantage arising from it. And a good governor hath always this consolation in the discharge of so disagreeable a duty, that altho' one suffereth, numbers are protected and relieved: he hath always the same noble consideration to support him in that irksome office, which the orator pleaded for the prosecution of *Verres*; that altho' one man was accused, a nation was defended: and therefore, as nothing would be more unworthy the character of a good Ruler, than to suffer any part of his people to become a prey to

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fraud, or oppression, or violence; so is there nothing in which he can assert his character with more honour, than in relieving, protecting, and preserving. — A Ruler is the Shepherd of his people; and he is truly and gloriously in that character, when he is employed in rescuing and defending his flock: A good Ruler should delight to be seen in the same light in which *David* shewed himself when he was examined by *Saul*, in 1 *Sam.* xvii. *Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose up against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him: thy servant slew both the lion and the bear.* And, no doubt, this noble and generous spirit of subduing oppression, and protecting innocence, was one reason why the Providence of God took him from the sheep-folds, removed him from following the ewes great with young, that he might feed *Jacob* his people, and *Israel* his inheritance. Nor did *David* belye these early promises of good government, these noble earnest of a princely genius: for we read,

read, that he did indeed *feed his people with a faithful and a true heart, and ruled them prudently with all his power.*

And as *David* is an example of a wise and a good governor, *Job* is yet a more perfect pattern in every instance of justice, mercy, and protection, due to a dutiful people. *When the ear heard me, saith he, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, then it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him, the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it cloathed me; my judgment, was a robe and a diadem: I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame: I was a father to the poor, and the cause I knew not, I searched out. I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.* These were *Job's* comforts! The relief he administred to others in the time of his power and prosperity, were his own greatest relief in the days of his affliction. He well knew, that *a Ruler beareth not the sword of justice in vain: that he is the*

Minister of God, to relieve the afflicted and the oppressed ; and not only so, but *to execute wrath upon every soul that doth evil.*

And thus I have gone through the several parts of a good Ruler's duty and character. First I shewed you, that he was *the Minister of God*;—the proudest title that mortality can boast ! And yet this title is still more enobled, from the second consideration laid down from my text,—That he is the *Minister of God*, for the good of mankind. This is the great end of government : and *Titus Vespasian* had a true notion of it, when he cried out, *My friends, I have not reigned to-day ; for I have done no good**. He knew, that to be a Ruler, was to be a benefactor to mankind ; and therefore, when he ceased to do good, he ceased to govern. And, beyond all controversy, it is this spirit of beneficence which hath always given dignity, which hath often given divinity, to the greatest characters of antiquity. And it is

* I chuse to report it thus after *Themistius* (Orat. 6. *Paris* edition, p. 80.) not only because this sentiment is more to my present purpose, but because it is much more noble and worthy a great prince, than that reported of him by *Suetonius*.

The same saying is also reported of *Alexander the Great.*

in this light, that Christianity hath represented the Blessed Saviour of the world; whose glory is summed up in that short account of him, — *Who went about doing good.* This was the employment that distinguished and ennobled the character, even of the Son of God.

But of all the ways whereby men in power may be benefactors to mankind, that of influencing them to goodness by their example, as it is in its own nature the most lovely, so it is the easiest in the practice, and the most inexcusable in the neglect. — A good life is a strong, a living, and almost an irresistible exhortation to goodness: its native beauty attracteth the love and admiration of all that behold it: and, what men admire, they imitate.

The King that governeth his kingdom virtuously and justly, (saith the great *Chinese Philosopher**) *is like the North-star, which, being fixed itself, is the rule the rest go by.*

Good men in power are lights set up on high: they are beacons to direct men in this

* See Navaretti's account of *China*, in *Churchill's collection*, vol. 1. p. 119.

turbulent and shelvy sea of life. And, surely, there cannot be a more lovely, there cannot be so lovely an office in life, as to direct to virtue and truth, to conduct to temporal and eternal happiness! *Captain of our salvation*, was the most glorious title that ever was conferred upon the Son of God.

In the last place I told you, that the duty of a good governor was not only to encourage to goodness, and to reward righteousness, but likewise to discountenance demerit, and punish iniquity. And altho' this be in appearance the least amiable part of the Ruler's duty; yet, when we consider that the end of this severity is the safety and well-being of society, (for the punishment of a few is the preservation of multitudes) we shall find, that a righteous Ruler is, in this respect, acting in the character of a guardian Angel, whose business is to relieve, and protect, and preserve: and in so doing to diffuse joy, and health, and happiness all around him. These were the God-like dispositions that made *Titus* the delight of mankind; that made *David* worthy of empire; that exalted the man after God's
own

own heart into the character of God's Minister. These were the reflections that supported *Job* under all the weight of his afflictions : these were his robe and his diadem when he was stript of authority and of honour : this was his glory, when all the grandeur of the world had forsaken him.— Was this the glory of *Job*? It is the glory of the Great God of Heaven! For what is there more glorious,—what is there so glorious, even in the exercise of Omnipotence, as the protection and preservation of the universe? as the communication and continuance of life and happiness to that infinity of beings which he hath created to share in his felicity? As if God could not be infinitely happy, unless that happiness were infinitely diffused. It is no wonder, then, if these are the offices with which the Almighty is peculiarly pleased, as being the noblest imitations, and most lovely transcripts of his own adorable perfections; such as will best resemble men to the Divinity in this world; and make them happy with him to all eternity in the next.

This

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This happiness, He, of his infinite goodness, vouchsafe to all those *who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST. Amen.*

SERMON

S E R M O N XV.

THE
Mutual Duty of Princes and People:
Preached on the Anniversary of the
Martyrdom of King CHARLES I.

PROV. XXV. 4, 5.

*Take away the dross from the silver, and
 there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.
 Take away the wicked from before the King,
 and his Throne shall be established in right-
 teousness.*

IT may be said of this collection of *Proverbs*, that it is a system of *Solomon's* moral wisdom; containing, according to the common division of the Schools, his Ethics, Oeconomics, and Politics. And as they seem principally written for the use of his son, who was to succeed him in his throne, it is no wonder to find them abound with many precepts and observations of singular excellence, and infinite importance to Princes: such as those in particular, that admonish him to detest and discountenance flattery, falsehood, bribery, oppression, cruelty, and

and corruption of every kind : and, on the other hand, admonish and exhort him to give all possible countenance and encouragement to truth, integrity, and wisdom; to guard against the power of his own passions; to be patient of monition and reproof; and, above all, to found his dominion in justice. Of these excellent precepts, it were to be wished, that the following divine sentences were deeply engraven on the crowns, on the thrones, and in the hearts of Princes--

As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.

The Prince that wanteth understanding, is also a great oppressor, but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.

Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the King, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

Corruption and iniquity are in empires, what dross is in nobler metals; they debase, and make them brittle. A mixture of dross in silver, sinks its value and its beauty; makes it frail, and less fit for use: it will neither
bear

bear the hammer, nor the fire; nor can you mold it into any thing excellent: let the dross be removed, and the parts immediately recover a better coherence and stability; and the whole, a new beauty, and a higher value.

Corruption mixes itself with empires, as naturally as dross doth with metals: and as naturally robs the parts of their due coherence and stability; and debases and depreciates the whole: it sinks the estimation and credit of a kingdom, and a crown, in the eyes of all that behold it; makes it frail, and unfit for the purposes for which it was intended: it can neither bear trials nor attacks from without, nor heats and commotions from within: remove this corruption from it, (which requires the highest skill of the finer) it quickly acquires a new lustre, becomes more solid, coherent, and stable; rises at once in estimation and intrinsic value: in one word, it is then rightly fitted to answer its noblest ends and uses.

From the words thus explained, I shall first lay down these plain points of doctrine:

- I. That all permanent power must be founded in Justice; and that, in order to effect

effect this, all persons in power must carefully guard against the influence of evil advisers.

II. I will apply, in the best manner I can, these observations to some few of those transactions, which occasioned the sad solemnity of this memorable day.

And, lastly, from the great misconduct of many men in those times, and the abominable corruption of others, I will make and apply the most useful observations and inferences I can, to the persons and characters of the present times.

And, first, all power that would be stable and lasting, must be founded in Justice.

And this proposition holds equally true of all power whatsoever; whether arising from publick authority, or private property, or supposed merit of any kind: because justice is the only solid and permanent foundation of all. It is the foundation upon which all societies are built; and the great cement that keeps all the parts of them together: in which not only Princes, Rulers, Judges, and other Ministers of justice, but likewise every private man, are in some measure, guardians

dians of every man's property; and every single act of injustice is in reality injurious to the whole; is a violence and an insult upon the publick peace; and is, besides this, an indignity and offence against GOD, the great guardian and governor of the world.

Wicked councils and devices may indeed succeed for a while; but to imagine, that they shall hold out always, that they shall prevail steadily, and permanently, against the established order and constitution of things, against the natural and joint interests of mankind, and against the superintending power, wisdom, and justice of God, is just as weak, as if a man should imagine, that he could by private artifice, suspend the great law of gravitation, and hinder bodies from tending to their natural centres; because he finds he can for a time obstruct the one in its immediate and apparent effects, and interrupt the other in their natural progress. In one word, the imagination is as wild, and as weak, as it is wicked.

If then power can be permanently founded in nothing but justice, it is a clear and self-evident consequence, that all persons in power should guard against the influence of
evil

evil advisers; forasmuch as all such naturally tend to pervert and warp them from the ways of justice, and consequently to sap the only solid foundation upon which their power is built.

To apply this to the purpose before us:

The King of *England* is the guardian of the liberty and rights, religious, and civil, of his people. This is his true character, and the only foundation of his power: and it was rightly and judiciously observed by a great minister of a neighbour nation, that a *King of England, who will be the man of his people*, (that is, will be a true guardian of their rights and liberties) *is a great Prince; but if he will be more, he is nothing.*

In this situation, he hath all the power that a good man should take, or a wise man wish; a power to do justice, to defend right, and to repress wrong; that is, in one word, a power to make his people happy. Should a guardian Angel wish for more? and should frail and fallen man be trusted or tempted with more?

If ever there was a Prince upon the *English* throne, that should or could (with safety to
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the fundamental rights and privileges of his people, and true interest of his country) be trusted with more, King *Charles the first* (of blessed memory) was apparently that man: a Prince of more personal virtues, than perhaps any one Prince recorded in history; and all those virtues founded upon their only sure and solid basis, — true religion, and the fear of God. He was valiant, temperate, just; a true lover of his people, compassionate of their errors and misfortunes, and religiously tender of their well-being. In his private life, equally exemplary in filial piety, in paternal affection, and in conjugal fidelity: a lover and encourager of all polite arts; not from humour, vanity, or fashion; but a true taste and knowlege of their excellence: statuary, architecture, painting, and the science of medals; flourished under him: a lover and patron of learning, and a great example and encourager of religion, which he equally understood, and practised in its purity; and well knew how to defend against all its adversaries, and died defending it: and as he was (under God) its great stay, it is no wonder that it fell with him. Surely of such a Prince (humanly

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judging

(judging and speaking) it may with great propriety be said, that God gave him in his mercy, and took him away in his indignation.

It was the misfortune of this excellent man, and unhappy Prince, whose character I have now given, and whose cruel murder we this day deprecate and deplore, to be bred under maxims of government ill suited to the genius of his people; and misled (through the equal influence, corruption, and treachery of his ministers) by counsels of an evil tendency, to suffer the beginning of his reign to be blemished with a conduct ill befitting his true character: many measures were entered upon, which can in no wise be justified; and, I trust in God, will never be attempted to be justified from this place. He was himself early sensible of them, and, upon conviction, granted his people's petition of right; whereupon all things seemed to promise a fair prospect of union and happiness: but the subsequent ill conduct of some of the King's ministers, the distrust created by a *Popish* counsellor in his bosom, by illegal aids and loans cheerfully given by *Popish* recusants, and favours conferred in return;
and,

and, above all, the bitter heart-burnings, and long-working animosities, created by so long a disuse, and such frequent and sudden dissolutions of Parliaments, and inflamed by a most seditious *Puritan* faction, bred too many ill humours, to be easily corrected and cured, even when the most healing and well intentioned measures were taken to effect it. The fever was too high; some blood must be spilt, and that the best and noblest of the nation, before the ferment could be laid; and at last the disease must end, like an incurable malignity, in the ruin of the constitution.

The gracious Prince, truly and tenderly affectionate of his people, sensible at last, that their just rights had long been withheld, resolved to give them full satisfaction, and make ample reparation for all the preceding misconducts of his reign; and, to shew the sincerity of his intentions towards them, fatally consented to make themselves judges in their own cause; and now, as much too complying, as he had been restive before, confirmed an act for continuing their session, until they had settled every thing to their own intire satisfaction.

Whoever candidly considers the extent of the prerogative, at this Prince's accession to the crown, the example and practice of his predecessors in the most exceptionable parts of his conduct, supported by the opinions and writings of the most learned men of the age; and, on the other hand, reflects upon the perverse obstinacy, and restive refusals of his people to his most just, and reasonable, and necessary demands—demands for supplies, which they themselves occasioned, promised, and made necessary—will find great excuses for many parts of a conduct, which he can neither applaud nor approve.

And whoever candidly considers his whole conduct, from the calling of his last parliament, to the day of his death; and weighs with that, his compassionate spirit, his true piety, and the integrity and the uprightness of his heart; cannot but acquit him (from that moment at least) of all tyrannous and oppressive intentions towards his people; as well as of the guilt of that black and unnatural rebellion, which began in the tyranny of the people, and ended in the tyranny of an *usurper*. A rebellion, which filled these kingdoms with sects and sacrilege, with oppression

pression and rapine, with blasphemy and blood! A rebellion, which (however begun) was carried on with the most shameless hypocrisy that ever disgraced religion; and concluded with the most determined cruelty that ever debased or depraved humanity; in the cool and deliberate murder of the King, after a long train of preceding insults, and outrages.

What ends of Providence are answered by great examples of suffering virtue, exhibited to the world at certain periods, altho' obvious to us in many circumstances, are fully known only to the Almighty, in all. It was perhaps necessary, that so great a sacrifice should be made to the settlement of the best constitution in the world upon its true basis; and the limiting of its parts to their proper bounds.

It was perhaps necessary, that so great a monument should be set up to the eyes of Kings, to shew their absolute dependence upon the great Governor of the world, in common with the meanest mortals: to shew them equally subject to the saddest reverses of fortune; from which, no dignity of station, or confidence of power, can secure them:

to teach them the necessary lesson, of an humble dependence upon the Power and Providence of that God, who at his will *poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty*: to teach them to cry out with righteous Job, in the day of their downfall, *Know now that God hath overthrown me; he hath stript me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head.*

It was perhaps necessary, that a monument of terror should be set up to the Princes of a free people, to guard them against the least approaches or attempts to tyranny: to teach them, that no personal merit, no excellence of nature, no acquired accomplishments, no combination of virtues, can give quiet to their reign, or stability to their throne, independent of the affections of their people.

It was perhaps necessary, that a monument should be set up to the people, to deter them from sedition, and popular tumults: to shew them, that excess of power is as dangerous in the hands of their representatives, as in those of their rulers; and that they can as hastily degenerate into more arbitrary and cruel tyrants.

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It was perhaps necessary, that the evils of both extremes should be equally and effectually felt; in the commons, and the usurper; to convince all thinking men of the nature and necessity of a true temperament between both: which seems, however, neither to have been thoroughly understood, nor properly pursued, before the establishment of things under the late happy Revolution-- A Revolution, which its bitterest enemies have no way more maliciously studied to revile, than by wresting it into a parallel with the transactions of these detested times.

Which brings me to the third point proposed; which was, from the great misconduct of many men in those times, (the times of the great rebellion) and the abominable corruptions of others, to make and apply the most useful observations and inferences I can, to the persons and characters of the present times.

In the first place then, the misconduct of some few Ecclesiasties in this reign, their intemperate zeal for some ceremonials in religion, and their unwarrantable ambition of secular power, should be a monition to the Clergy of the established Church, (both

of the present age and all others) to keep themselves within the bounds of that lawful authority, and those just rights and privileges, which the constitution hath conferred, and the nature of their holy calling requires. And their very enemies must do that justice to the present orders of Ecclesiastics amongst us, as to own, they seem in no disposition to transcend those bounds; that they have learnt a true christian temper with regard to all that dissent from them; and are as sincere friends to liberty, and abhorrrers of arbitrary power, as any of their fellow subjects: nor can it be denied, that the highest order amongst them hath lately given as strong a proof of being faithful in their Episcopal charge, and at the same time, as faithfully and as disinterestedly true to the trust committed to them by their Prince, as the best and most truly primitive of their christian predecessors.

To the Lords and Commons of the Laity, the wicked transactions of that accursed rebellion should warmly recommend a strict and inviolable regard to the rights, privileges, and properties of their fellow subjects. The Lay Lords remembering, that when they had
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consented to deprive the Bishops of their seats in Parliament, they were themselves soon after voted useless: (so sacred a thing is property, so infectious and catching is evil example! so ruinous and so ready to recoil upon the heads of those that set it!) The Commons remembering, that when they had robbed the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of their rights and privileges, they were themselves quickly after stript of all their own; and made as arrant vassals, as they had before made their brethren, and their betters: drawing down upon themselves that just judgment and sentence of our Blessed Saviour, *With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

To all this may be added, that the transactions of these times should make both Lords and Commons beware of contention, either with their King, or each other; always remembering that fine observation of Solomon, *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with.* The true translation is, *Therefore let go contention before it be mixed:* That is, before things are so confounded by it, that it is
hard

hard to distinguish who is in the right, and who in the wrong. It is evident, that, in the beginning of this unnatural rebellion, neither did the King mean absolute power, nor the people a democracy: but when once the contention was begun, when a breach was once made in the banks of the dike, the waters rushed out with an impetuosity that never was thought of; and as they flowed, perpetually widened the breach, until they bore down all before them, and in the end laid the country well nigh desolate.

In the next place, let me seriously and earnestly admonish those who could have no share in the execrable guilt of this day, to beware how they adopt the guilt of their ancestors, not only by turning the murder of that excellent Prince into ridicule, but likewise by defending and applauding it; and celebrating the memory of his murderer, for the very act of murder: the memory of a murderer, a parricide, a tyrant. Always remembering, under what character they are concluded by the wisest of mortals, who allow themselves to jest and sport with guilt: *Fools, saith Solomon, make a mock*
of

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of sin. Always remembering, that he who forbids us to *slay the innocent, and the righteous*, expressly declares in the same sentence, that he *will not justify the wicked.*

Is it humane to insult the fallen? though neither majesty, nor law, nor justice, could protect this unhappy Prince alive, let compassion protect him dead: give him quiet in his grave. Is it christian to trample upon the memory of a King truly christian? a man, whose private character not malice itself hath tainted; owned, by his very enemies, to have lived (otherwise than as a Ruler) in all the innocence of a Saint, and died in all the majesty of a King: let me add too, in all the humility of a Christian, and all the steadiness of a Martyr. — Is it wise to make merry with murder and parricide? Is it decent to insult the piety and wisdom of the Legislature, by turning a solemn and religious fast into a day of festivity and reveling? Is not this wantonly to draw the guilt of blood upon their own heads?

Surely in this Prince (if ever in any other) was fully verified that fine observation of Solomon; *A righteous man falling down before*

fore the wicked, is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring. In this man's fall, the fountains of learning, religion, and virtue, were effectually troubled and corrupted ; but, GOD be praised, they are, through his unmerited mercy, once more cleansed and cleared. May they never more be polluted by the fall of the righteous, by the triumph of the wicked !

In the last place, from the memory of this execrable rebellion, let me exhort you to revive and to cultivate that antiquated principle of christian loyalty ; a principle, which our corruptions have almost banished out of the world. By loyalty, I mean fidelity to the constitution as by law established ; and to the King as supreme, and guardian of it. Such fidelity, as was steadily exhibited to both, by those noble patriots, who adhered to their royal master *King Charles the First*, in all his misfortunes : many of whom died, openly declaring and avowing it with their last breath, to the confusion of their enemies ; and some of whom happily survived the calamities of their King and Country, and, to their immortal glory, saved the constitution under his son. Let us learn from
their

their great examples, to *fear God and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change*: Let us learn from their examples, as well as from the sacred rules of our holy religion, to despise and detest their principles, and renounce their practices, *who walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities*. And, in order to this, let us carefully guard against, and steadily oppose, those too fashionable republican principles, which, under the pretence of more zeal for liberty, would draw us again into double thralldom. Those principles which once already overthrew the best constitution in the world, and turned a free people into utter slaves. Those principles, which, under various guises, but of late more particularly under the mask of patriotism, I am satisfied (in the mouths of many of their abettors) mean any thing else rather: and, if God in his wrath should suffer them to prevail, must end, as they are intended, in popery and arbitrary power: and of this, I think, we need no better proof, when we hear men of that religion, and men of none, join equally in the cry.

In

In the name of GOD, let us be contented with having made one desperate experiment; and be truly thankful to GOD for having delivered us from one ruin; not provoking him to heap another upon our heads.

What means this horrid outcry, not only against the persons, and characters, but the very office of Kings! Surely That at least is of divine appointment.

Let us then expect Kings without faults, when we ourselves are blameless. Let us then hope for perfect models and mirrors of majesty, when we deserve them: when we study perfection in ourselves; when we *do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.*

In the mean time, is it wise, is it loyal, is it christian, to vilify the characters of Kings upon every occasion; and expose every supposed error of their government, and infirmity of their nature? We are loud upon many points of misconduct in Princes, which we can never know with certainty; and sullenly silent upon many advantages of their administration, which we see and feel. One thing we know, that our gracious Sovereign, GOD be praised, hath great and good qualities;

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lities; fortitude, integrity, and truth; and a heart truly honest and protestant, stranger to guile, and detesting dissimulation. This also we certainly know, that, under his administration, we enjoy many great and invaluable blessings; freedom and plenty, peace and truth. For which we are bound truly and sincerely to thank GOD; and to our thanks are we bound to join our daily, our earnest, and incessant prayers, that GOD would inspire his heart with every princely, and every christian grace, and bless and prosper his reign. *Give the King thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son. That in his days the righteous may flourish; in his days, and in the days of his descendants, with abundance of peace, as long as the moon endureth.*

Which Thou of thine infinite mercy grant,
through the merits and mediation of
JESUS CHRIST.

14 NO 63

A V A R I C E

As inconsistent with

SOCIAL DUTY,

As with

TRUE RELIGION.



S E R M O N XVI.

PSALM X. ver. 3.

*For the Wicked boasteth of his Heart's
Desire ; and bleisseth the Covetous,
whom God abhorreth.*

THIS psalm complains to GOD of the riotous oppression of wicked men, and declares the humble dependence of the righteous upon his providence and protection. But the question is, Why these oppressors and persecutors speak well of the covetous ? The answer is very easy, Because they are the same persons. — Oppression is the effect of avarice ; for few men have ever arrived to such a degree of depravity, as to distress and injure others, out of wantonness and gayety of heart ; that were a depravity more than devilish ! — No, *the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire* ; that is, he hath strong appetites and passions eager to be gratified : and if

this cannot be done without oppression and invasion of his neighbour's property, yet done it must be at any rate; and when it is done, it must be defended in the best manner he can. Now this defence cannot be drawn from any of the principles of reason and virtue (for these are all against him) and therefore he must carry it off with a high hand; *he boasteth his heart's desire* — Why should not he consult his own happiness, and trample every thing underfoot that stands in his way to it? As for his enemies, that is, all those whom he hath made so by his oppressions, *he puffeth at them*, saith the psalmist. He hath now arrived to a height of power that setteth him above their resentments; and as for their grievances, he regardeth them not: the happiness or misery of others is nothing to him: — he hath thrown off all sense of humanity, and the next step he takes, is to shake off his religion too: for soon after it followeth, *He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth his face; he will never see it.*

Here we may observe the gradual progress of impiety in a wicked heart: First, a man resolves to gratify his unruly appetites in all their demands: this cannot be done, without
out

out invading his neighbour's property. Then follow fraud and oppression. After he hath rioted in his wickedness for some time with impunity, he then applauds his happiness, and openly vaunteth his vices; *he boasteth his heart's desire*: However, he hath yet some little remains of conscience, and sense of divine vengeance hanging over him, and that he must get rid of as fast as he can.

The compass of this discourse will not allow me to pursue the progress of impiety thro' all its gradations; and therefore I shall confine myself to that single point which is principally alluded to in that part of my text — *the covetous whom God abhorreth*.

In speaking to which words, I shall consider them as intirely abstracted from the occasion of them in this psalm, and only deduce this one point of plain doctrine from them--- That covetousness is a vice in a very particular manner abhorred and detested by Almighty God — and that for these following reasons:

I. Because it is a vice directly opposite to the goodness of God.

II. Because it is a vice very opposite to the Divine mercy. And,

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III.

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III. Because it is Idolatry.

First, I say, covetousness is a vice peculiarly abhorred of God, as being directly opposite to the Divine goodness: for covetousness is an inordinate desire of wealth; that is, an unreasonable desire both of acquiring and retaining it. Now the end of wealth, beyond all question, is to serve the necessities and conveniencies of life, and, after that, to be a supply for charity and beneficence. Whereas, then, the covetous man is oftentimes so far from consulting the convenience and well-being of other men, that it is very well if he supplies his own necessities, it is plain he acts in direct contradiction to the ends of wealth, and to all the purposes of the Divine goodness, in bestowing the blessing of life upon mankind.

If we would form a right idea of the Divine goodness, we should consider Almighty God, as a Being of infinite perfection and felicity; full, and indefectible, completely happy in Himself, and, consequently, incapable of any accession of happiness from any thing else. To consider a Being so constituted, creating a world, perhaps an infinity of worlds, and in them many infinities of creatures,

creatures, to share in his felicity; as if he could not be infinitely happy, unless that happiness were infinitely diffused! how glorious, how amazing an idea of the Divine goodness is this; and yet how infinitely below the reality! Was man then created in his image? Was he impressed with a strong instinct of universal love and good-will to all the world about him? Is this principle the characteristic of every thing that is great and good in life? Is it the noblest imitation and resemblance of the Divinity? Nay, is it not almost the only remain of that glorious similitude in which we were made? And is not the wretch, that centres all his regards in himself, and defaceth this divine impression, this godlike form, from his soul; is not this wretch the most abject, the most worthless, of God's creatures? How is he fallen, and deformed beyond expression! the very reverse of God and goodness! and is it possible, that, in that abandoned condition, he can be other than the object of Divine detestation? *the covetous, whom God abhorreth.*

And as he is thus monstrous in the sight of God, he is not less so in his relation to mankind: for, as the several states and societies

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cieties of men are termed bodies politic, so, in truth, they bear a greater analogy to animate bodies than is commonly imagined. The governing part of society may be considered as the heart, the principle of life and motion; from whence the blood is diffused, first, to the nobler vitals, and thence to the several limbs and parts of the body, in proportion to their bulk and use; in like manner as wealth is more immediately derived upon the nobler members of society, and from thence to the ministerial, and less noble: and as the blood was intended for the support of the whole body, considered as such, and not for the subsistence of any particular limb, otherwise than as that limb makes a part of the whole, and a proper conveyance to some other part below it; so wealth was never intended for any one, or any number of men in society, how great or noble soever, but for the whole body politic. And altho' the principal members of the state receive it by greater chanel, and in greater quantities, than their inferiors, as the arm receiveth greater quantities of blood, and by larger arteries and veins, than any of the fingers; yet was that wealth never intended

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tended for their sole use, any more than that blood was intended for the sole use of the arm without any regard to the fingers — Now, since this is exactly the case, let us consider what would be the consequence of any unnatural check in this circulation ; for, if any part receive its nourishment in its proper proportion, and retain it unduly, must not some other part of necessity be defrauded ? nay, perhaps, a great number of parts ? and what will be the consequence, even to that which retaineth more than it ought, but pain, and an unnatural rumour ? and hath not this an evident tendency to render the whole body diseased and monstrous ?

From hence we may gather how utterly unfocial this vice is ! and how ruinous it must of necessity be to the public, if G O D, in his wrath, should suffer it to become epidemical in any society ! because, then, the members of that society, instead of contributing to their mutual happiness, by all the offices of humanity, and a fair commerce, must lay themselves out to defraud and over-reach one another, by all the evil arts imaginable ; and,
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consequently, must contribute, as much as in them lieth, to their mutual destruction*.

But, secondly, — Covetousness is a vice particularly detested by Almighty God, because it is so very opposite to the Divine mercy. — Now mercy is that attribute of the Almighty, which representeth him compassionate of the miseries and distresses of his creatures, and ready at all times to relieve them, when they call upon him : it is that attribute, which rendereth his infinite power and wisdom peculiarly amiable to the sons of men : it is that attribute, which he hath more fully and emphatically set forth in the Holy Scriptures, than any other ; as if he delighted to be known by no other name than the God of mercy : and as he hath made it the great characteristic of his own nature, he hath also made it the strong instinct, and the great ornament of ours, as well as the highest and most important duty in life : he hath bound it upon us by the strongest engagements, and the severest penalties imaginable — nay, our blessed Saviour

* As was but too fatally found in the late pernicious *South-Sea* scheme.

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Saviour Jesus Christ hath gone so far, as to make it the sum of all religion: and hath represented the day of judgment in such a manner, as if the determination of our final state intirely depended upon the discharge of this single duty — *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.* And, besides all this, charity is a virtue so absolutely necessary in this world, this vale of sorrow and affliction, that one would think, if neither God nor reason enjoined it, our very miseries would force it upon us. Since, then, this virtue is of such infinite importance, so necessary to the miseries of this life, as well as to the felicities of the next; of such near resemblance to the mercy of God, and of such peculiar acceptance with him; surely avarice, its great enemy, which shuts the eye, and stops the ear, and hardens the heart to the cries and complaints, and calamities, of our fellow-

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fellow-creatures, must be, in a particular manner, detestable in his sight.

And here I must observe, that that covetousness which makes a man unjust, is a much worse kind of covetousness, than that which makes him only uncharitable. He that withholds his bounty or beneficence from me, is unjust to his Maker, and cruel to his own soul, as well as to me; but he that withholds my just right from me, or oppresseth me in the pursuit of it, is a villain and a robber; is, in the eye of GOD and justice, a much viler wretch than the robber upon the high road — he robs in the spirit of calm cruelty, from the fulness of pride, and the insolence of power — want and necessity carry their excuse along with them; and therefore the poor robber is to be pitied, even when he is to be punished; but the rich robber is altogether inexcusable, is utterly detestable ---- and however their power and their numbers may protect them in this world (for GOD knows they are but too numerous), the time will come, when they will be the scorn and derision of men and angels: when even those, whom they now oppress, will have but too much reason to
pity

pity them; when everlasting misery in another world shall be the reward of their cruelty and iniquity in this.

But, thirdly, the covetous are, in a particular manner, detestable in the sight of God, because they are idolaters. Thus the apostle, in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the *Ephesians*, at the 5th verse --- *This ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.* And again, in the 3d chapter to the *Colossians*, at the 5th verse, *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry* — and that it is so, is plain; because the very essence of worship consists in serving and confiding in the object of our worship: for all the external acts of devotion are only so many proper indications of trust and obedience, and are ultimately referred to them: now it is certain, that the covetous man both confides in his mammon, and serves him with all his heart and soul. The first of these is plainly implied in the 31st chapter of *Job*, at the
24th

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24th and 28th verses; where that righteous man, freeing himself from the imputation of avarice, acknowledgeth, among other suppositions, that if he had put his trust in his wealth, he might justly be charged with idolatry; *If (saith he, ver. 24th) I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence, &c. this also were an iniquity; for I should have denied the God that is above.* The same thing is evident from the rich man's conduct in the parable, who enlarged his barns, and laid up goods for many years; for when he had done so, he said to his soul, *Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* Here is not one word of gratitude to God, for the blessings bestow'd; or dependence upon him, for the continuance of them: for, when he had treasured up an immense fortune, he then thought he had a sure fund of felicity; and, in that confidence he placed all his hopes and happiness, and looked no farther. The young man in the gospel is also a sad instance to the same purpose; who chose rather to leave Christ, than to part with his large possessions: and such also was *Demas*; who
forsook

forsook the apostles, and renounced Christianity, *to cleave to this present world.*

Besides, it is evident, from the nature of the thing, that the covetous man is the slave of his avarice, and not the servant of God: for God commandeth him *to do good after his ability*; but avarice forbiddeth him to do any good, and that he obeyeth: God commandeth him neither to injure or oppress his neighbour; his covetousness commandeth him to do both, where he hath power to support him in his villainy; and he doth both: God commandeth him *to give alms of his wealth, and never to turn away his face from any poor man*; but his avarice commandeth him to shut his hand, and to turn away his eyes; and he doth so: God commandeth him *to lay up treasures in heaven*; and not to lay up treasures on earth, *where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal*; his avarice commandeth him to do just the contrary; and he obeyeth it religiously. Is not then the covetous man an idolater to all intents and purposes? Nay, he is the worst kind of idolater in the whole world; because his devotion is not so much as ultimately referred to God, but is in di-

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rect contradiction to the Divine worship in every part of it; whereas almost all other idolatries are aimed, at least, and intended, to God, and injoin some kind of obedience to Him. It is no wonder then, that covetousness should be a vice so peculiarly abhorred of God, since it is so directly destructive of all religion, and since it is utterly impossible to *serve God and Mammon* at the same time.

And thus having shewn you the reasons why covetousness is so peculiarly abhorred of God, I now proceed to make some observations upon the folly and danger of this vice.

The desire of wealth, is, beyond all question, rightly and wisely founded in our nature; because it is necessary, in order to a competent provision of the conveniencies of life: and it is appointed to grow with our years; because, as age and infirmities come on, which disable us from the activity and industry of our youth, such a provision is more necessary to support the wants and weakness of old-age, and to provide for an helpless issue: but, when that provision is not wanted, or is already made, is sufficiently and abundantly made; to provide endlessly,
and

and without any rational prospect, to toil and have to no purpose that can be named, is surely one of the greatest instances of infatuation that can well be imagined; but indeed it ought to be considered more in the light of a just curse, than a high degree of folly: that those wretches, who have taken off their dependance from Almighty God, and put their confidence in their riches, should find their misery and their plague in those very things wherein they vainly fixed their happiness. And what rendereth this evil yet worse, is, that it is without remedy; For, as *Aristotle* rightly observes prodigality may be cured, either by precept or by want; but avarice is incurable: because age and infirmities increase it: and this is so peculiarly the vice of old-age, that in youth it is perfectly monstrous! Young people should be beneficent, to be agreeable: to endear them to mankind, and recommend them to such friendships and assistances in life, as may help them in their several pursuits and prospects; and therefore, if this vice be indulged in that season, the consequence is, that it checks the progress of every thing that is great and excellent in our nature; and it is impossible:

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to say to what extravagances of folly and madness it carrieth its wretched votaries, before the last period of life, in the ordinary course; unless, by good fortune, it happen to starve them in the way.

Good God! what a lamentable prospect is it to contemplate upon the folly and misery of mankind in this point: to see a parcel of groveling wretches given up to endless anxiety and delusion; sacrificing all the enjoyments of life, their health and happiness--- nay, perhaps their very lives and souls, for a poor pittance of glittering dust, that hath no value but in the use; and yet is never intended to be used: for a covetous man always overlooks the end, and fixeth upon the means: nay, he dreads the enjoyment of his fortune, as much as he doth the loss of it; and, indeed, to him they are the same thing. Now this desire is plainly against reason and nature, and therefore 'tis insatiable. Every desire that is natural is easily satisfied; because it is limited, and hath proper objects suited to it. Thus, if a man be hungry, he will be satisfied when he hath eaten a good meal; and his hunger is, for some time after, no more than if it never had been:

and

and if he eat more than nature requires, he is loaded and oppressed: so likewise if he be thirsty, such a proportion of drink as nature demands will quench and allay that thirst, and then he is at rest. --- It is plain, therefore, that covetousness is not a desire of nature, but a disease: it is the thirst of a dropy; the more it drinks the more it desires, and the more it is inflamed. A covetous man may indeed imagine, that such a certain sum or portion of wealth will satisfy his desires, and make him sit down happy and contented; but, alas! he is deceived; for, as *Solomon* finely observeth, *he that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance, with increase.* And the reason is evident; for, if a man set his heart and affections upon one talent which he hath no need of, and think he would be happy to attain it, it is plain, from the nature of the thing, that he must think two talents would make him twice as happy, and three talents thrice as happy, and so on to infinity. --- And therefore it is plain, a covetous man's love of money always must be in proportion to the quantity: if he love an hundred pounds well, for its own sake, he must love two hundred

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twice as well, and so on.--- Hence it is, that the desires of the covetous always increase with their estate; and every day they grow richer, they discover new wants, and new necessities: and a new purchase, which a covetous man hath set his heart upon, is, to him, as real a want as any in nature; nay, perhaps, a much more craving and painful one, as false appetites are more violent and insatiable. And, what is most lamentable, is (as I before observed) that this desire groweth with his years, when it cannot possibly have any meaning, or any end: to see men, whose income is double their expence, nay, perhaps, ten times more, and that income as long as their lives; perhaps, too, childless, and in the decline of life; without heir, nay, without any relation they can think themselves in conscience obliged to make a fortune for; to see such creatures anxious of gain, as if their daily bread depended upon it --- *There is* (saith Solomon, in the 4th chap. of his *Eccles.* ver. 8.) *there is one alone, and there is not a second, yea, he hath neither child or brother; yet there is no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour,*

labour, and bereave my soul of good? This also is vanity; yea, it is a sore travail.

If men of this character have any remains of religion, they generally support themselves under this stupid conduct, by resolutions of bequeathing some part of their substance to pious or public uses at their death; and yet, if they have any degree of right reflection, they cannot but see this to be a senseless subterfuge: we give to God, when we have no one else to give to, that hath any kind of rational claim to the fruits of our labours; we return to God some part of what we derived from his bounty; but we take care to let him see we are as ungrateful as we possibly can; for we pay nothing as long as ever we can with-hold it from him, and, at length, out of our great generosity, we give him the preference of what we cannot keep, and do not know else how else to dispose of. A deathbed-charity is nearly upon the same foot of merit with a deathbed repentance; the miser parts with his money, as the sinner doth with his sins; because he can keep them no longer. Can any thing be more absurd, or more unmeriting at the hand of God, than such a benefaction? And yet, such as it is, it

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is by much the wisest and most rational part of the miser's conduct. One great cause of their folly in this respect is this: they imagine their power, and the respect they meet with in the world, dependeth upon their wealth, and must diminish with it; and they are certainly right in thinking so, as long as they have no other claim to the esteem or regard of mankind: God, in his just judgment, hideth from such wretches, the glory, the honour, the veneration, that attend upon beneficence: he hideth from them that inexpressible complacency and gladness of heart that results from conscious virtue; from the discharge of duty, from the relief of distress, and, above all, from the propagation of piety and virtue, and happiness all around them. How glorious an employment is it, to be, in the best sense of the word, one's own executor in the management of a plentiful fortune, for the good of mankind, and glory of God! to put it out of the power of chance, or fraud, or law, to suppress or counterfeit your will, or defeat your good intentions, for the service of religion, and the felicity of your fellow-creatures! This were a kind of heaven upon earth; this

were

were indeed a glorious and a Godlike use of wealth: but it is a glory the grovelling wretches of the earth are unworthy of: and therefore God giveth them over to the delusions of their narrow hearts, to be blind, as they are hardened; to live unloved, and die despised; to be without esteem here, and without heaven hereafter.

In the last place, to pass by all that train of evils which covetousness almost necessarily draweth after it, such as pride, cruelty, oppression, and injustice; and suppose we had no account to give for the getting of a great estate; yet have we not an account to render for the using of it? Doth God give us our possessions in property, or in trust only? Confessedly in trust: and, if so, must not our accounts be in proportion to our income? Let a mans estate be call'd what it will among men, is he, in the sight of God, proprietor of any more than serveth the necessities and conveniencies of life, and a proper provision for a family? that is, such a provision as is competent to the condition of life we are in? And as for the overplus, is he not steward to the Almighty? And must he not one day render him a severe account? And can there be a
more

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more flagrant madness than to be solicitous only to increase our income, that is, how to inflate our accounts? whereas, in all reason, our concern ought to be how to clear them, by laying out what we receive according to the trust reposed in us. And therefore, my brethren, how much we receive of the good things of this world, let that be at the will of our Master; but be it our concern to disburse them as we ought--- Surely then, in this reflexion, we should be so far from desiring to be immensely rich, or envying the condition of those that are so, that even if no trouble attended the attainment of wealth, nor anxiety the keeping of it, nor vexation the loss; we should rather envy the safety and the security of those who are not tempted with such dangerous blessings, but are happily delivered by Almighty God, from the heavy account of a great estate, and the curse of a covetous mind.

If we must desire without bounds, let us apply to proper objects: unbounded desires should have objects that are so too. Let us then turn our whole hearts to those mansions of bliss, where only there is *fulness of joy*, fulness without satiety, joy without alloy!
and

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and abundance without avarice! Possessions equally unenvied, unfading, and undisturbed! *There the weary be at rest, and there the wicked cease from troubling; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.* There, where all will enjoy all, and the power and plenty, and pre-eminence of others, will be new funds of mutual and perpetual felicity! In one word, where our utmost hopes and expectations cannot possibly be disappointed, but by being infinitely exceeded.

To which mansions of consummate and unenvied felicity, God of his infinite mercy conduct us all, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ.

THE

THE
Great IMPORTANCE and WISDOM
OF
EARLY INDUSTRY.

Preached before the

UNIVERSITY,
IN THE

Cathedral Church of St. PATRICK's, *Dublin*,
in the Year 1720.

THE SERMON XVII.

Great Importance and Wisdom
Prov. VI. ver. 6. 7. 8.

consider her ways, and be wise.

EARLY DUSTY.



WORTHINGTON 21 T. N.

IN THE

It is observable of Solomon, that as he is
entirely without of sin, so he is not less
loves in the praise of his wisdom; and yet
severe in the reproach of idleness; and yet
at the same time that his indignation is raised
against the sluggard, he seems more at a loss
how to instruct and reform that unhappy race
of mortals, than any other whatsoever. men
of every other character were capable of im-
provement from application and industry;
but what could be expected from those who
were

S E R M O N XVII.

PROV. VI. ver. 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 6. *Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise.*—

7. *Which having no guide, overseer or ruler;—8. Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.*

IT is observable of *Solomon*, that as he is every where throughout his writings zealous in the praise of industry; so he is no less severe in the reproach of idleness: and yet at the same time that his indignation is raised against the sluggard, he seems more at a loss how to instruct and reform that unhappy race of mortals, than any other whatsoever: men of every other character were capable of improvement from application and industry? But what could be expected from those who

were

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were too lazy to put any precepts into practice, however useful and wise? Had he referred them for instruction to the schools of philosophy, many precepts must be learned, and many books turned over; and they must have resolved upon a regular course of study and discipline, before they could attain those habits, and that wisdom they wanted; and this he knew would be death to them, even to think of: and therefore the shortest method he could take with them, and indeed the shortest course that could possibly be taken for their amendment, was to remit them for instruction to the ant: where they needed only to look and learn; where, stretched at length by the side of a sunny bank (as proper a situation for sloth as their hearts could wish) they might see all the surprising effects of industry, and learn all the fruits and advantages of it, at their ease,--without stirring from the spot, without the expence either of toil or study, and, in short, without any other labour than that of keeping their eyes open.

Here, might they behold a little creature labouring under a load of more than four times its own bulk, and conveying it with incessant industry to the common store; and

if

if he fainted, and grew unequal to the task, he might soon have the pleasure to see a good-natured neighbour hastening to his assistance; the loaded ants going in one way, and the unloaded going out another, that they might not obstruct one another in their passage.

In the course of a few days loitering, he might observe the common stock of provision immensely increased: and, what must be a contemplation of great pleasure to such a genius, he might observe, that the labours of the year ended with the harvest; that, when they had no more to gather, they had no more to do, but to sit down and enjoy what they had got: that they had provided convenient coverings for themselves, and granaries for their food, and were under no necessity of suffering the severities of the winter-season, but were warmly lodged in the midst of peace and plenty; and never need put their foot out of doors, unless, perhaps, to sun themselves, or their provisions, after a glut of rain: which were no more than a pleasant recreation after so long confinement. And, lastly, he could not but observe, with conscious shame, that he never met with one idler in the whole community;

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that

that every individual contributed something to the publick fund; and best consulted his own good, by co-operating for the good of the whole.

When the sluggard had observed all this at his ease, one would think it would not be very hard for him to turn it into an useful lesson of life; and to reason thus shortly and pertinently upon it--I also am a member of society, and should I be utterly insignificant in it? Was I made to be less important than an ant? or, Am I less bound to contribute to the good of the community? Is not my own inseparable from it? and shall I not co-operate for the common good? Every society hath a fund of wealth, best acquired by honest arts: from whence also arise the other national funds of power, credit, and esteem: Should I be insignificant to all these purposes? and can I be happy and honourable, if I be?

Let me reflect, if I also can have resolution and industry enough to labour out my season, like the ant, I shall not only contribute to the public good, but shall also, probably, be able to get myself a comfortable provision for life.---Life also hath its seasons, like the year: the time of health and strength

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are its summer, and its autumn: if I employ these, as I ought, in some useful and honest pursuit, I shall, in all probability, have acquired wherewithal to support me in the winter of life, when the season of labour is over, and when ease and rest will be very agreeable and desirable to me: How infinitely happy shall I be, if I can live to see the day when I shall have nothing to do but to eat and drink, and take my rest!

And here we see the exceeding wisdom of *Solomon's* proposing the ant to the imitation of idlers, because it is an example that should excite them to industry, even for the interest of their sloth; forasmuch as it instructs us, that a short course of unwearied industry is the surest means to purchase a long vacation of ease, and uninterrupted rest.

It is not barely upon this principle, but upon others of more moment, that I shall endeavour to illustrate the wisdom of early industry (the most important of all social duties) to this audience; and when the wisdom of this virtue hath sufficiently recommended it to you, I hope you will need no other motive to engage you in an earnest pursuit and practice of it.

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The importance of this virtue to the public needs no proof; forasmuch as it is self-evident, that no man can be an useful member of society, who doth not, some way or other, contribute either to its peace, honour, security, or interest: and how this can be done, without a proper exercise and improvement either of the powers of his body, or mind, or both, in some useful pursuit, is utterly inconceivable. And therefore I shall content myself with shewing the advantage of industry to every man in his private capacity.

And, *first*, Industry is wise with regard to the interests and concerns of the body: we were made for labour, and a certain portion of exercise is absolutely necessary to our health and strength; and the body can no more be preserved in vigour without it, than without its natural food. What the condition of our constitution in paradise might be, is not easy to say: but it is evident, that from the moment man was driven from that delightful seat, and condemned to support his life by the sweat of his brow, labour is become necessary to our well-being: and tho' it was pronounced upon *Adam* as

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a curse, and in punishment of his transgression: yet, whether it were to manifest the continuance of that curse upon his posterity, or rather, in the usual course of the Divine mercy, to turn curses into blessings, to such as patiently submit to his chastenings, and make a right use of them; thus much is certain, that we are doomed to labour from that day to this! God and nature demand it of us; and if we cannot be happy with it, we must be miserable without it.

As our constitutions are now mortal and corruptible, it is evident, that, in some part or other of them, we die daily: and when those perishing parts become useless to the strength and vigour of the body, they are a load and incumbrance to it; and if not thrown off by exercise, or otherwise, become matter of disease and infirmity to us; and when they grow so numerous as to corrupt the mass of blood, if we have not strength enough to throw them off in the discharges of gouts and fevers, we must sink and die under them.

Now, the true and natural way of getting rid of these noxious humours, is, by exerting the body in some useful labour, by which

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its health and strength may be preserved and improved ; and, when the body is in vigour, the labours of life will rather be a pleasure, than a toil to it ; for the body finds as strong and natural a pleasure in employing its powers to their proper ends, as the mind does in the pursuit of truth, or in the employment of any of its faculties to their proper ends. And, on the other hand, a state of idleness and inactivity is as naturally irksome to a man in full health, when the business of life calls for his strength and industry, as it is to a generous steed to be rein'd in, when he is drawn out to the course.-----The perfection and happiness of every being, and every thing in this world, consists in the right application and exertion of their powers to the true ends and purposes for which they were ordained ; and whenever they are diverted from those ends, or applied to other purposes, they become useless and unhappy. ---If the body be not employed, it becomes bloated, languid, and enervate : sloth seizes it at first, and all the infirmities of life pursue sloth ; and then the languid pleasures of inactivity are followed by the sharp pains of slow and racking distempers : whereas labour,

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bour, as it is the sure pledge of health, so is it the sure source of all those pleasures that result from it: nay, experience teaches us, that the spirits are raised by exercise into a more constant chearfulness and vivacity, than can be supplied even by the most generous wines: Nay, there is a pleasure even in the weariness that succeeds temperate exercise, which far excels all the enjoyments of sloth: and if the labours, and even the languors, of industry be agreeable, surely the refreshments of it must be doubly delightful. It was *St. Paul's* rule, that *if any would not work, neither should they eat*. And this is not only morally just and righteous, but it is naturally so.--- The end of food is to supply the wastes of the body from labour; therefore if men will not labour, neither should they eat; and if they will eat, yet they had better not: for they must do it without appetite, and without pleasure. and, after all, when they have taken in their food, it will turn more into disease than digestion. This is the true state and settled rule of life; but there are exceptions to this rule: there are who live only to eat; whereas labour, as it is intitled to refreshment, so it is intitled to health and

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happiness from that refreshment. What an exquisite relish does it give to the plainest and coarsest food! and what softness even to a pillow of stone! *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet*, says *Solomon*; whereas the very rest and ease of the slothful is a burden to him: for it is certain, that as men may eat till the most delicious foods lose all their relish, so they may rest till feathers lose all their softness, till pillows and beds of down can supply them with no one easy spot whereon to recline their languid head; and if they chance to doze in that uneasy condition, that sleep, which is a refreshment to a body wearied with labour, can be only an additional grievance to a body that is wearied with rest.

But this is not all; for as industry procures a stock of chearful health, without which the good things of this life cannot be enjoyed, so is it naturally fitted to procure a fund of good things for the enjoyment of life; for all these are the purchase of industry, as the want of them is the punishment of sloth.--- *He becometh poor*, says the wise man, *that dealeth with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich*.

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rich.--- And again: The hand of the diligent shall bear rule, but the slothful shall be under tribute.--- The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.--- The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags. And therefore, whoever desires to lay up a sufficient store of the good things of this life, for the consolation and support of his old age, let him take care to employ his youth in an honest industry; for this is the only sure means of procuring those blessings.--- And if he fails to do this, let him rest assured, that, in the decline of life, he will be pursued by two of the cruelest evils in life, remorse and poverty! fruitless remorse, and unpity'd poverty: whereas the diligent shall not only have wherewithal to supply his own wants, but to relieve the wants of others. *The slothful* (as Solomon expresses it) *coveteth greedily all the day long; but the righteous* (i. e. he that exerteth an honest industry) *giveth, and spareth not.* The man that hath raised himself by an honest industry, *giveth, and spareth not*; knowing, that, as to the wealth and affluence of this world, *there is no good*
in

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in them, but for a man to rejoice and do good in his life; and that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour: this is the gift of GOD.--- And therefore, as far as pleasure is preferable to pain, and health to disease; as far as sprightliness exceeds stupidity, and sound sleep, disturbed dreams; as far as freedom is preferable to servitude, and dominion to dependence; as far as plenty, and a power of doing good, surpasses pining desire, and pinching poverty; so far is industry wiser and better than sloth, even with regard to the concerns of the body.

But, *2dly*, Industry is wise, with regard to the interest of the soul. — Virtue and knowledge are to the soul, what health and strength are to the body; the same industry is equally perfective and useful, and the same indolence equally ruinous and destructive, to both: the same sloth, that brings diseases upon the body, brings vices and evil affections upon the soul — *I went by the field of the slothful, says Solomon, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding: and, lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles*

nettles had covered the face thereof: and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

The field and vineyard of the slothful are exact emblems of his mind: instead of grapes and olives, instead of the noblest fruits of culture and study, it is over-run with thorns and nettles, and evil weeds of every kind; with noxious vices, with perverse appetites, and vexatious humours, that tear, and sting, and are equally vexatious to himself, and all around him, without any more distinction than the briers and nettles of his vineyard make between their owner and any one else that walks thro' them: nay, not only so, but its *wall is broken down*, its fence of virtue and knowlege is in ruins; nor has it any thing to defend it from the intrusion and devastation of vice; it is now an open prey to every invader.

Plato tells us, that industry is as much preferable to idleness, as brightness is to rust; plainly implying, that idleness is to the mind what rust is to metals; and in truth it is so: it does not only tarnish its lustre, and make it unfit for use, but it also eats into it. The mind was formed for exercise as well as the body; and, if it be unemployed, it will
not

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it will not only grow rusty and dull, but it will also prey upon itself. And tho' it should not degenerate altogether into the condition of the sluggard's vineyard, tho' it should not fall into all the ruin and devastation of vice; yet will it never want thorns and nettles, it will never want sufficient supplies of spleen and evil appetites, to punish the neglect of honest pursuits, and useful attainments.—

The desire of the slothful killeth him, says Solomon; for his hands refuse to labour.—

And sure it must be a state of miserable torment, passionately to desire what we see we shall not enjoy, and cannot be at the pains to procure: and it is obvious to observe in the world numbers of men repining to death every day, at the advancement of others to honour and eminence from the improvement of those abilities which were naturally, perhaps, inferior to their own: and yet all this is but the just and natural reward of honest industry, in proof of that excellent observation of the wise man, in 22d chap. of his *Proverbs*, 29th verse. *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.*

Again,

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Again, Industry is yet farther wise with regard to the concerns of the soul, because a proper improvement in knowlege is necessary to all conditions in life.—Every man does not need to be a merchant, or a mechanic; but every man should be a man of knowlege, and, if possible, a man of learning, at least, in his own profession.—For this reason the antients, tho' they had but one *Ceres*, and one *Vulcan*, one deity that presided over the labours of the hammer, and the plow; yet had they nine *Muses*, because their aid was useful to men of every character and condition in life. Learning is an accession of new light, and new knowlege; and new light, and new knowlege, will always be useful to inform and guide us to more advantage in every pursuit; and there is scarcely any art so mean and mechanic, to which learning might not be both ornamental and useful: there is scarcely one profession in the world, where a right application of knowlege would not carry us to uncommon degrees of eminence. And if learning be thus honourable in every other profession, surely where it is itself the principal, if not the sole profession, the want of it must

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must be infinitely reproachful! and yet there is no medium, men must either want it, or take pains to attain it: and hence it is that *Minerva*, the goddess of wisdom, among the antients, had the epithet of *Egypsius*, or *the worker*, given her, to shew that none but the industrious were intitled to her assistance.

Now, as wealth is to be acquired in youth, for the support of age, so is knowlege also with more reason:

1st, Because it is an higher and nobler attainment. And, 2^{dly}, Because age, which for the most part adds to our wealth, from the accession of avarice, and the retrenchment of the expensive passions, takes away from our knowlege, by impairing the powers of the mind; and that, when we want it most both for our own credit, and the instruction of others: and therefore we should take care to be plentifully provided. *Wise men*, saith *Solomon*, *lay up knowlege*----well knowing it is the noblest and most valuable treasure they can possibly lay up: and if, as the same wise man observes, *the grey head is the beauty of old men*, it is beyond all doubt, that wisdom is the glory of the grey head.

head.--- O! *how comely a thing is judgment for grey hairs!* (says the wise Son of Sirach)! *and for ancient men to know counsel!* O! *how comely is the wisdom of old men, and understanding and counsel to men of honour!* Eccl. xxv. 4, 5. And therefore, as knowledge is better than ignorance, and virtue than vice; as far as culture exceeds wildness and barbarity, and brightness excels rust;--- as light is more lovely than darkness, and counsel more becoming the grey head than uninformed dotage; so far is diligence wiser and better, and more valuable, than idleness, with regard even to the temporal interests of the soul.

In the *last* place, If diligence be wise with regard to the temporal concerns of the soul, it must surely be much more so with regard to its eternal interest. There are many pursuits that are proper and ornamental in life; there are many of high concern; but there is one only of infinite importance: there are many of excellent use; but there is one only of absolute necessity: and happy, beyond all comparison, wise and happy, are they who have early *chosen that better part.*---*The*
fear

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fear of the Lord, says Solomon, is the beginning of wisdom. — And it is observable, that the *Hebrew* word here interpreted *the beginning*, signifies either the foundation or the top of any thing; and in the present application of it, it is strictly true in either sense: the fear of the LORD is the foundation and the top of all wisdom. That early and prudent caution, which is the parent and the companion of true wisdom, best enters into the mind, and dwells there, from an awe of religion, from the sense of an infinitely wise and powerful Being always present to every motion in our mind, and every action of our lives; and there is not a thought in our heart that is hid from him: and as this is the best principle of that caution and consideration which should conduct our lives; so is the end it aims at, at once the wisest and the noblest pursuit of reasonable beings: if it be wise to lay up early *treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal*; is it not infinitely more so, to lay up for yourselves *treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through and steal*? If it be wise to lay

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lay up early treasures of knowlege, for the conduct of life, for the improvement of our professions and faculties, and for the honour and ornament of our advanced years, to support us with dignity in the decline of life; is it not infinitely more so, diligently to search after that knowlege that will adorn our Christian profession, and treasure up those precepts that will conduct us to everlasting glory, and give us honour in the sight of angels? Thou sluggard, if it be wise in thee to learn of the ant, to make provision for the winter of life, for one short and uncertain season; is it not infinitely more so, to lay up for all eternity---for a life of endless duration and inconceivable happiness?

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THE
True NATURE and CHARACTER
OF
E N V Y:

AND
Its *Utter Inconsistency* with PRIVATE,
as well as SOCIAL HAPPINESS.

S E R M O N XVIII.

Prov. XIV. 30.

A found heart is the life of the flesh;
but every utterance of the bones.

It is agreed among all the
laws of nature, and the
duties we owe to God, and
reduced to this great principle of uni-
versal benevolence. That we lay it down
as the fixed and fundamental rule of all our
actions, to do all manner of good, and to
abstain from all manner of evil.

The motives to this conduct, besides the
desire and satisfaction of it, both to our
own nature, and the Divine will, are these:
1. That (however men of narrow appre-
hensions may imagine otherwise, yet) all
mankind in reality consist their own interest
best, when they contribute to the good of
the whole. 2. That there is an infinite
pleasure resulting from the practice of virtue.

S E R M O N XVIII.

PROV. XIV. 30.

*A sound heart is the life of the flesh ;
but envy the rottenness of the bones.*

IT is agreed among moralists, that all the laws of nature, as far they comprehend the duties we owe to one another, may be reduced to this one great principle of universal benevolence, *viz.* That we lay it down as the fix'd and fundamental rule of all our actions, to do all manner of good, and to abstain from all manner of evil.

The motives to this conduct, besides the beauty and agreeableness of it, both to our own nature, and the Divine will, are these:
1. That (however men of narrow apprehensions may imagine otherwise, yet) all mankind in reality consult their own interest best, when they contribute to the good of the whole. 2. That there is an intrinsic pleasure resulting from the practice of virtue,

and such as hath a natural tendency to peace of mind, and health of body. And, 3. That it endears and recommends us to the love and esteem of all mankind.

Whereas, on the contrary, anguish of heart, hatred, disesteem, and insecurity, are the natural rewards of iniquity, even in this world: and as this is nowhere more conspicuous than in the passion and vice of envy, now before us; so the contrast betwixt that, and a humane, benevolent, good-natured disposition, is nowhere more strongly and beautifully expressed than in the words of my text: *A sound heart is the life of the flesh; but envy the rottenness of the bones.* A sound heart, or, as the original may otherwise be rendered, *a heart of lenity, or medicine.* All which are meant to signify, that a benevolent, good-natured disposition, is a kindly, genial, vital principle, that infuses balm and healing into the blood, and produces a strong pleasure, like that which results from good health, and a right temperament: whereas envy is a leaven that sours and corrupts, sets all the humours upon the fret, and is the direct contradiction to happiness and health; the bane of all that is good,

good, and beautiful, and desirous, in life.

And therefore, in order to represent this odious passion in its true light, and make it as hateful to you as it is detestable in itself, I shall endeavour in the following discourse to shew you,

I. The nature and origin of Envy; and who they are that are most subject to it.

II. I shall shew you the symptoms by which it may be known.

III. I shall endeavour to explain and trace out the ill effects of it.

IV. And lastly, I shall endeavour to assign the remedies of this pernicious passion.

First, then, As to the nature of Envy, it is a pain, or uneasiness, arising from an apprehension of the prosperity and good fortune of others; not because we suffer from their welfare, nor that our condition may be bettered by our uneasiness, but merely because *their* condition is bettered.

There is a strong jealousy of pre-eminence and superiority implanted in our nature by Almighty God, for wise and noble purposes: to excite to the pursuit of laudable attainments, and the imitation of good and great actions. When this principle takes root in a good mind, it is called Emulation. Now emulation is also an uneasiness occasioned by the good fortune of others; but not because we repine at their prosperity, but because we ourselves have not attained the same good success. The effect of this principle is, to excite us to great designs, and worthy performances. 'Twas This that made *Cæsar* weep at the sight of *Alexander's* statue, to think that he had already passed that age at which the other hero had conquered the world.

But when this principle meets with an evil, corrupt disposition, it then degenerates into Envy, the most malignant and hateful passion in human nature, the worst weed of the worst soil! And this is so far from stirring us up to worthy imitations and laudable pursuits, that it takes a quite contrary method: and labours to taint and depreciate, what

what it doth not so much as attempt to
equalise us in some things, y^e in others

Now this passion affects us chiefly in relation to our equals; at least those that we think should be so, if some good turn of fortune had not raised them above us: and the reason of it seems to be this; It hath pleased God to implant in us all, strong desires of power and affluence: but forasmuch as there is no certain portion of these fixed, nor any standard settled, by which it may be determined when any man enjoys either of these in proportion to his merits; the only way of estimating our success in the attainment of them, is, by comparing our fortune with those of like birth, or education; or condition of life with ourselves: if we find we have equaled or exceeded these, the natural consequence is joy and complacence in our condition; but if we are exceeded by them, Emulation, or Envy: Emulation, if we are virtuous and good men (for then this pre-eminence of our equals is a new spur to our industry, and urges us on to honest pursuits); but Envy, if we are corrupt and worthless; for then we are prompted to decry and lessen what we cannot equal; that so, at least,

least, we may bring those down to our own level, whom we cannot bear to behold above us.

From hence it follows, that we seldom envy those whom their birth and fortune have placed greatly above us, nor those that are very far inferior to us; because neither of these are the standards by which we measure our own felicity: neither do we envy the dead, nor men of remote and foreign regions; because, with these, we can have no contention, or competition of honour and pre-eminence.

Now, the persons most subject to this unhappy passion of Envy are, 1st, The covetous; because they think every thing ravished from themselves, that accrues to their equals; imagining that, if it had not been for their interposition, they might have attained those advantages that were equally in their reach.

2^{dly}, (If these may justly be distinguished from the covetous) men of little and mean spirits are most subject to Envy; because to these every thing appears great and extraordinary: as if their minds bore some analogy to microscope-glasses, which magnify in proportion to their littleness.

3^{dly},

3dly, Men of extraordinary endowments and abilities, or that are renowned on account of some uncommon excellence, or mighty performances: and, in general, men that are studious of the same attainments, whether of wealth, or wisdom, or valour, or the like, are very subject to Envy; because their interests either do, or at least are often imagined to interfere, and therefore they cannot bear a rival. 'Twas this set *Pompey* and *Cæsar* at mortal variance, because, as the historians observe, the one could not bear an equal, nor the other a superior.

Proud men also are remarkably subject to this vice, especially if their pride be founded upon wealth, beauty, birth, or any other consideration distinct from real merit, if they have no real and valuable advantages to pride themselves upon (such as learning, wisdom, virtue, or useful arts, of some kind, whereby the world may be benefitted); because then their birth, or wealth, or other accidental or imaginary advantages, being their only distinctions above others, they cannot bear to see those men grow up into esteem, and wealth, and honour, by the force of their own merit, who before were their inferi-
riors;

riors; and who, they foresee, must one day be better and more justly esteemed than themselves.

And, *lastly*, Old men are very subject to Envy: because they see the youth possessed of those advantages which once were theirs, and which they imagine they have yet a right to.

And thus having shewn you the nature and origin of envy; and who they are that are most subject to it: I proceed, in the next place,

II. To shew the symptoms by which it may be known. And,

First, It is a shrewd sign of our envying any person, when we find ourselves averse from doing him good offices; for this is a great corruption of nature, which, in its purity, is social and benevolent, and hath a strong propensity to acts of kindness and goodness, as well as a strong pleasure in the performance of them: whereas envy is a narrow, selfish principle, utterly inconsistent with that universal charity, which is the first dictate of uncorrupt nature, and which our blessed Saviour recommends to us as the distinguishing

stinguishting and fundamental duty of his followers. And yet one would think, that even pride and ambition (which are almost inseparable ingredients of Envy) should find their account in good offices: forasmuch as to relieve the indigent; to ease the oppressed; and to comfort the afflicted; to benefit our enemies, and to do good for evil, are, in reality, the happiest employments and noblest triumphs of human nature! and I am confident would always be thought so, if it were not for that corrupt, selfish principle, that checks and cramps every thing that is good and noble in our nature: and therefore it is much to be suspected, that avarice is the great root of Envy; because that is so apt to represent every thing as lost, and taken away from ourselves, that is given to another: as if we were necessarily injured by every thing by which another is benefited. But, 2dly,

A second symptom of Envy, and a much surer than the former, is, when we are pleased with the evil of others. This is such a degree of corruption, as reverses our whole nature, and renders it the very contrary to what it should be. It is a corruption that

approaches to the malignity of curſed ſpirits, nay, and is monſtrous even in them. — And it hath this ſingularity in it, that it hath evil for its object, in an eminent degree, above any other paſſion whatſoever. Even anger, unruly and outrageous as it is, relaxes either by time or ſatisfaction, and for the moſt part calms into good nature and benevolence; and nothing in nature, but Envy, is ſteadily and permanently malignant.

3dly, Another ſymptom of Envy, is, a cenſorious diſpoſition; and this diſcovers itſelf either in induſtriouſly ſilencing the good actions of others, or expoſing the bad: But indeed it ſeldom reſts here. — It extends itſelf even to the doubtful and indifferent; nay, too often, to the good and virtuous: and ſeldom fails, either by uncharitable interpretations, or ſtrained conſequences, to affix ſome colour or intention of evil to them. And becauſe it is often ſeen in this ſhape, and is always odious in all ſhapes, therefore it uſes a variety of artificeſ to hide its deformity. The moſt common diſguiſe is pity; and it muſt be owned it is at the ſame time the beſt: becauſe there is no excellence in this world that hath not its allay.

Learning is too often proud, judgment slow, wit injudicious, and so of the rest: and therefore 'tis easy to hide the rancour of our Envy, under the compassion we would be thought to bestow upon that unhappy imperfection, which clouds and depresses the excellence we seem to admire, at the same time that we industriously malign and decry it as much as possible.

At other times it puts on the appearance of wit and delicacy: it is a nicety of taste that disposes us to dislike and disrelish the accomplishments and performances of others; but still with an air of contempt, and conscious superiority, rather than of envy.

The last symptom of envy that I shall mention, is, a discontented, querulous disposition, repining at the dispensations of Providence; that the foundations are out of course, virtue and merit are despised and oppressed, and nothing but vice and villainy prosper, and carry all before them! and yet, when all this comes to be enquired into, it will be found, perhaps, to mean no more than that the complainant is not in the condition he wishes to be; or, in other words, that the most worthless man alive is not at
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the top of his ambition and avarice! Let any man but consider the shameful hypocrisy of this conduct, to make a seeming concern for the interest of virtue and religion a cloak to the most flagitious vice! Nor is the folly of it less conspicuous than the impiety; forasmuch as the true way to happiness and prosperity is an honest industry, and an humble submission and entire resignation to the wise dispensations of the Divine Providence; and not to grasp at any thing that was not intended for us; because, when we do, we are sure of vexation and disappointment. This querulous and censorious disposition is attended with this farther ill consequence, that it too often degenerates into doubts, and despondency, concerning the Providence of God, and concludes in the horrors of despair.

And thus much for the several symptoms of Envy. I proceed, in the *third* place,

III. To enquire into the ill effects of it: and these are of two sorts, either to the envious person, or to society.

First, To the envious person; and one of these my text expresses, by *rottenness to the bones*.

bones. Good nature operates agreeably, both upon the body and soul; whereas envy wastes and distracts: the eyes are sunk by it, and the countenance becomes haggard and livid: a secret canker gnaws the heart, and eats into the bones, *like a moth fretting a garment.* The mind, in the mean time, is in a perpetual ferment, *working, and restless, like a troubled sea.* A succession of turbulent and unruly passions seize it: all within is in uproar! and conscience and religion lost in the tumult.

But this is not all—The worst effect of envy, is, the influence it hath upon the moral state of the mind; it does not only kill our quiet, but our virtue likewise. And the reason is evident---All virtue consists in a social disposition; love and benevolence are the fountains from whence it flows: and therefore when envy once poisons the mind with despite, and gall, and enmity, may we not justly ask, with St. James, *My brethren, can the same fountain send forth sweet water and bitter?* The soul is called off, by this means, from the noblest objects and inclinations, and perverted to the vilest and the worst; when, instead of being employed in contriving our own salvation, and

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promoting the good of mankind, we are busied in projecting calamity, and torture, and affliction, both to ourselves and others. In the mean time death steals fast upon us, and the ends of life are lost and defeated. We live in the world like furies, and we leave it in a condition that renders us unfit for every thing but the conversation of fiends, and cursed spirits. And this is one obvious reason, why wicked men are to dwell with devils in another world; because, when once the mind is imbued with the malignity of vice, it is unfitted for every thing but the society of cursed spirits: and it is as impossible for it to derive any consolation from the society of angels, and arch-angels, and all the beatitudes of heaven; as that Envy, hatred, and malice, should delight in love, and friendship, and universal charity.

But, 2^{dly}, Another ill effect that envy hath upon the person possessed by it, is, that it exposes him to the just hatred and aversion of all mankind; and therefore it is utterly repugnant to reason, and the common interests of life, because it puts a man upon such methods of obtaining his ends as must of necessity defeat his own purposes: for no
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man is self-sufficient, but hath frequent need of the friendship and assistance of others, in all conditions and circumstances of life. And is any man so foolish as to imagine he can procure the friendship and assistance of others by calumny and abuse, by despite and enmity? This is stupid and absurd. And therefore envy will be so far from advancing us in the attainment of any one useful purpose of life, that it must of necessity be the greatest clog and impediment to all our endeavours; forasmuch as it will at once deprive us, both of the love of society, and the favour of God, and leave us equally detested and despised of both.

But the ill effects which this pernicious passion hath upon society, are beyond all expression: it is *an unruly evil, full of deadly poison*; and spreads its malignant influence where-ever it comes. *Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?* saith Solomon. Merit and innocence, the two great securities of peace and happiness, are so far from being shielded against it, that they are the most of all exposed to its malignant assaults, and the sure objects of its fiercest vengeance. Witness the violence of the sons of Jacob, who

could sacrifice their own brother to the jealousy of a dreaded superiority, even in a dream. Witness the implacable malice of *Saul* against *David*, the man of all the earth he was most obliged to; who had so often saved him, and his kingdom, from ruin; and was the greatest glory, as well as the greatest security, of his country. It unhinges all the obligations of gratitude and justice, and changes the very tendencies of our nature: it is conscious of its own malignity, and therefore 'tis impossible to relax it by good offices, because it justly regards all returns of kindness and benevolence to be (as in truth they are) the greatest reproaches to it. In one word, 'tis for the most part to this one fountain, that faction and strife, murder and hatred, and infamy, owe their rise; and therefore it is, that whensoever the apostles speak of it, they never fail to join to it murders, wraths, strifes, malice, evil-speaking, &c. to shew that these are all the natural, and almost unavoidable consequences of that passion. Thus *St. Paul* (*Rom. i. 29.*) speaking of the sins of the *Gentiles*, which were the consequences of their irreligion, mentions, among others, that they were *full of Envy*: and then he im-

immediately subjoins *murder, debate, deceit, malignity*. After the same manner, in his 2d epistle to the *Corinthians*, xii. 20. he connects *envyings, mischiefs, strifes, backbitings, whisperings*. St. Peter also connects *envyings and evil-speakings*: and St. James assures us, that, *where envying is, there is confusion, and every evil work.*—

But surely one of the most fatal and lamentable effects of Envy is, that it rages greatly and remarkably among persons that are studious of the same honest and laudable attainments: and therefore it were highly to be wish'd, that those men could be brought to believe, that where-ever there is virtue and industry, there will always be a fund of wealth and power, and honour, sufficient to crown the desires of any possible number of candidates in proportion to their merit; and that the fund of glory will always rise with the number of its competitors. It is in this commerce, as in all others that are wise and well regulated; the number of fair traders will, in the ordinary course of things, be so far from diminishing, that they must increase the wealth of a nation; and every single man, if avarice and private interest do not injuriously interpose, will be a gainer

by that increase: at least, it is certainly so in this, however it may hold in commerce of other kinds: forasmuch as in the pursuits of fame from learning, from virtue, from good abilities of any kind, the number of candidates, if Envy do not interpose, will always increase the fund of honour and applause: because every man will then have just so many more equal and judicious admirers, as he hath competitors.

I come now to the *last* thing proposed, which was, to assign the best remedies I can for the cure of this pernicious passion. And the first rule I shall lay down for the remedy of this evil passion of Envy, is, That we settle our opinions of things, and endeavour to take a right estimate of them: we *call evil good, and good evil*; forgetting that the measure by which we are to judge of the true value of all things under heaven, is the price at which we find them rated in the law of God. The laws of God are the eternal standards of good and evil: what they recommend as valuable, or injoin as wise, to be regarded, are truly so; and what they disclaim as vile, or forbid as noxious, are found in fact to be so. And therefore
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the observance of these laws hath a direct and natural tendency to health and credit, and happiness of every kind; and the neglect and transgression of them as directly and naturally tends to misery and misfortune: inso-much that to a man who hath rightly considered his own nature, and the nature of things without him, there cannot be a clearer or more fix'd position than this, that the conformity of our actions to the law of GOD, must naturally tend to make us wise and happy; and, on the other hand, that sin and folly, and pain, are inseparably connected.

If then we settle our judgment of things according to the law of GOD, it is a necessary consequence from this, that we correct the erroneous opinion we have of superfluous wealth. Let us examine, Is there any blessing pronounced upon wealth in the holy Scriptures? Not one. There are indeed great blessings pronounced upon charity and mercy: and these blessings are fully insured to us, by being merciful after our power.----

If thou hast much, give plenteously: If thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little. All the great demands of life are within the compass of a very moderate

competency: our folly is, that we imagine wealth, that is in truth superfluity, to be the standard of all human felicity: whereas, if we judged rightly of things, we should esteem all superfluities to be, as really they are, trifles, that are wholly impertinent to our happiness; that can administer no one solid pleasure or satisfaction of life, otherwise than by being employed to beneficent and charitable purposes: and, even there, they have no more merit than what is derived from the goodness of the giver's will.—

They are desirable, or otherwise, according to the wisdom and virtue of the owner: whereas, in their ordinary use, they seldom serve any higher or nobler purposes than ministering Fuel to all the unruly passions that tear and distract our lives; and more particularly to Envy, the bane of all felicity: for, as *Aristotle* justly observes, the more we abound, and the higher we rise in Wealth and power, the less can we bear to be equalled or outdone.—Is it possible then, that a man in his right senses can repine because he wants superfluities? or envy those that have them? Or, in other words, is it possible that any man in his senses can repine, that he

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is freed from the great incitements to pride, and envy, and avarice, to luxury, and intemperance, and excess? the great and sure torments of life?

But, 2dly, the next remedy of envy that I shall mention is, that we should endeavour to make a right judgment of our own worth and abilities; and compare our own with the condition of other men as impartially as we can: and if we do this with any degree of equality, we shall find, that there are others in the world, at least as good, as wise, and as valuable, as we are; and who enjoy stations and advantages they deserve as well: perhaps too we shall find, that if merit were the standard of honour and affluence, we should not abound altogether as much as we do; and others, that now pay court to us, would be raised to great heights above us: but, at least, we shall have abundant reason to bless God for the advantages of our own condition; and no reason in the world to repine at the advanced condition of others: we shall find abundant reason to conclude, that the several ranks and distinctions of men are indeed necessary to the government and well-being of the world; but, if we estimate

mate things according to the rules of reason and religion, do not in the least affect our real happiness. In short we shall find, that nothing in nature is more falsely rated than felicity; that the distribution of it is, in reality, infinitely more equal than is imagined; and that it is not poverty and wealth, knowledge or ignorance, honour or obscurity, but that it is, in truth, virtue and vice, religion and irreligion, good and evil dispositions, that make the great and material differences between the happiness of one man and another.

3dly, Another cure of envy (and what will effectually supersede the necessity of all others) is, to reflect seriously upon the vanity and insignificancy of all worldly advantages.——My brethren, would any man in his senses envy a poor insect the pride and the pleasure of basking and fluttering for a few hours in the sun? or envy the short-lived flower the pride and the gaiety of those rich delusive colours that blazon it to the eye, our ornament one hour, and the next our aversion; to-day admired, and to-morrow trampled under foot? And shall we envy him, *whose breath is in his nostrils?*
whose

whose glory fadeth like a flower? Shall we envy him who hath said to corruption, *Thou art my father*; and to the worm, *My mother and my sister*? Alas! what are all the favours either of fortune or princes, but the sunshine of a few hours, fleeting fast enough of itself in the natural course, and yet frequently over-cast before the short day is done? And what are all the vanities of this world but the gaiety of a few fading colours, feeding the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, for a season, but with no solid or permanent satisfaction?---Nay more, what is life itself, what is the life of man, more than the life of a flower? is not *all flesh* (as St. Peter most admirably expresses it, 1 Ep. i. 24.) *as grass*, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass? *the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.*

This once considered as it ought, what have we to do in this world, but to employ the little time allowed us, in the diligent discharge of our duty in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call us; renouncing all envious reflections and inquiries, all mean and unworthy solicitude about the transient advantages of others; and referring,

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in all humility, both their concerns, and our own, to the good providence of that God, who debases one man, and exalts another, for wise reasons, not always obvious to us, nor fit they should be? By this means our minds will be prepared for the influence and assistance of the Holy Spirit of God, and the Holy Ghost will delight to dwell with us, and *guide us into all truth*. And to this end we ought earnestly and incessantly to pray for God's assistance and direction in all our undertakings; and more particularly, that he would purify our souls from envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness. And we may be sure God will never be wanting, on his part, to those that are rightly disposed, and capacitate themselves for, his assistance: but it is vain either to hope, or beg, his aid in this case, as long as our errors remain with us; as long as wealth and honour are regarded as the greatest goods, and poverty and obscurity as the greatest evils.

In the last place; when we find ourselves inclined to censure the actions and intentions of others, to silence the good, to expose the bad, and malign the innocent and indifferent; in this case, we should remember and imitate

tate the goodness of Almighty God, who takes pleasure in the happiness of his creatures; who knows our infirmities, and hath compassion upon them; and because he delights in the salvation of sinners, deals with us, as if he overlooked the evil of our doings, for the sake of even that little portion of good that is in them. This conduct of the divine mercy and goodness it should always be our earnest care, as it will always be our highest glory and happiness, to imitate: and one signal and immediate advantage of it, will be this; that then we shall be so far from repining at the good actions and good fortune of others, that we shall rejoice and take delight in them: by this means we shall enlarge our capacity of happiness, and be enabled to share in all the felicity we either see, or conceive, others to enjoy: at the same time we shall refine and raise our nature, and be fitted for the society of heaven; where the servants and saints of God are delighted with their mutual felicity, and where the happiness of each would be exceedingly impaired, if it were not participated by all: and therefore it is, in this respect, a just and judicious representation which is made to us of heaven, under

der the image of a musical concert; where all enjoy all, to the extent of their capacity; and where, we all know, the pleasure of the harmony is greatly increased by being communicated.

To which region of consummate and unenvied felicity, God of his infinite mercy conduct us all, thro' the merits and mediation of *Jesus Christ*.

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F I N I S.

T H E

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der the image of a musical concert; where
all enjoy all, to the extent of their capacity;
and where, we all know, the pleasure of
the harmony is greatly increased by being

To which region of consternation and un-
envied felicity, God of his infinite
mercy conducts us into the merits
and meditation of Jesus Christ.

THE
TRUE NATURE
O F
P R I D E:

How *foolish* and *ill-founded* it is in
all its PRETENCES.

THE
NATURAL
HISTORY
OF
THE
ISLANDS
OF
THE
INDIAN
ARCHIPELAGO
AND
ADJACENT
REGIONS
BY
J. E. S. SMITH

TRUE NATURE



P. R. E.

Now and then
the British Museum
has been the scene
of a most interesting
and valuable
collection of
specimens
of the
natural
history
of the
Indian
Archipelago
and
adjacent
regions
by
J. E. S. Smith

S E R M O N XIX.

PROV. XXVI. 12.

Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.

SUCH a reflection as this upon Pride, from the wisest of all mortals, is enough to put every man living out of conceit with it, that hath the least remains of common sense: nay, one would think it were enough to put pride out of conceit with itself. And it would certainly do so, if it were not a vice as hardened as it is ignorant; that is, if it were not every way the most senseless principle in human nature. And therefore *Solomon* very justly prefers a fool, that is, a man of the lowest capacity, to him that is wise in his own conceit; for, by a *fool*, in this place, is not meant one entirely void of all the prin-

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ciples

ciples of knowledge, of all the powers of rational perception; because such a one it is impossible to conceive any hopes of. The fool here mentioned is what the *Greeks* call ἰδιώτης; that is, a simple, ignorant man: one who, although defective both in point of abilities and information, yet is in a capacity of being instructed and improved; and for that reason is preferred by *Solomon* to him that is *wise in his own conceit*; because Pride is such a degree of folly, as precludes all possibility of information and improvement: and therefore I think it necessary to premise, that this discourse is in no wise intended for the instruction or advantage of the self-sufficient part of my audience, if there be any such who hear me: for to intend so vain and impracticable a purpose, would be a degree of folly almost equal to the vice I am going to expose.---This discourse then is only meant for the use of those who are of a meek, teachable disposition; to guard or recover them from the infection of a vice, to which they are too much exposed, from ignorance, youth, inexperience, and inconsideration, as well as the influence of too many evil examples all around them.

And,

And, in order to do this, I shall endeavour,

First, To explain and state the true notion of Pride.

Secondly, I shall lay before you the symptoms by which it may be known, and the evils of each symptom. And,

Thirdly, I shall mention the ordinary causes, or rather occasions, of this vice; and shew you how foolish and ill founded it is in all its pretences.

First, then, The true nature of Pride consists in overvaluing our own worth, and thinking meanly and contemptuously of others, in comparison of ourselves: it ariseth from self-love, and is the utmost abuse and corruption of that blind principle. We have all a tenderness for ourselves, and our own concerns; wisely implanted in us by Almighty God, for our preservation and well-being. We have also a strong principle of good-will to the rest of mankind, no way inconsistent with that nearer concern for our-

selves, and our own interests, until Pride
step in; and divesting us of that diffusive and
God-like principle of universal good-will,
centres all our regards in ourselves.

Now the symptoms by which this pernicious principle may be ordinarily known, are these:

1st, A high look, and a haughty carriage.
There is a generation (saith Solomon, Prov. xxx. 13.); *oh! how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up.* A race of men, of such exalted vanity, as overlooks the rest of mankind, and regards them as an inferior species, below their notice; and therefore they will scarce so much as vouchsafe to look down upon them, unless sometimes, it may be, in pity and contempt.

This is that high look, of which God hath so often expressed his detestation in the holy Scriptures. Thus Solomon, in the 6th chapter of his *Proverbs*—*These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him: and the first of these is a proud look.* And David, in the 101st Psalm, *Him that hath an high look, and a proud heart, I will not suffer.* And, as this high look is detestable in the sight of God, it is

not less so in the eyes of men; for the meanest mortal expects, and hath a right, to be treated by the greatest, upon the foot of a natural equality; and consequently can ill brook with insolence and contempt; and therefore how any man of common sense can allow himself in a demeanour so hateful to God and man, is not easy to be imagined. Besides, this demeanour is not only very faulty, but it is also very foolish; because this fastidious deportment is such a vaunting of our own superior worth and excellence, as sets mankind upon examining our pretensions, and scanning our merit with such a degree of strictness, as perhaps the best actions, and most unblemished merit, in the world, can very ill bear. And, if such a scrutiny naturally tend to diminish the glory of the best actions, and the most exalted merit, how must it of necessity expose the folly and stupidity of all Pride that is ill founded, and render that utterly ridiculous! And therefore *Aristotle* defines a *magnanimous man*, *one that thinks himself worthy of great things, and is so: but, saith he, he that thinks himself worthy, and is not, is a fool*—ὁ γὰρ μὴ κατὰ φύσιν αὐτὸ ποιεῖν, ἡλίθιος.

Again, Another symptom of Pride, is, scornful language. It is true, a high look, and a haughty demeanour, are indications enough of inward Pride and Insolence; but then it is Pride within some bounds, and such as a wise man will often bear with, in pity to the ignorance from whence it flows: but scornful words are indications of more exalted insolence, and such as render it every way intolerable: and therefore some vain men, sensible of the inconveniency of this conduct, and dreading the rough returns such shocking treatment frequently meets with, are often observed to run into the other extreme, and affect a phrase and a demeanour uncommonly smooth and complaisant; to court those returns of civility and respect, which the stupidity or ingratitude of mankind might otherwise refuse to their superior merit: and this they find a successful method at once, to flatter, and (as they think) to conceal their vanity. And this, without question, is the wiser conduct of the two; because a rude, contemptuous treatment is shocking to the meanest mortal, and is naturally productive of hatred and contempt from all mankind: and as nothing can be
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more shocking than to meet with such returns from our own species; so nothing can be more faulty, or more foolish, than to deserve it.

But here we must observe, that this spirit of insolence doth not always discover itself in open reproaches, but chuseth sometimes rather to hide itself under the veil of smooth and subtile insinuations, or under the mask of civility and mirth, delighting to turn the manners and characters of men into ridicule; yet is it not less hateful to the rest of the world upon that account, but is rather more the object of their secret detestation, as it is more defended from their open resentments.

This spirit of reproach and ridicule, together with the folly of it, is most excellently set forth by *Solomon*, in the character of the *scorner*, throughout his whole book of *Proverbs*: where he is represented, first, as a fool; and not only so, but incapable of wisdom: secondly, as incorrigible: and, thirdly, as an abomination to God and man. Thus, *Prov. xiii. 1. A wise son heareth his father's instruction, but a scorner heareth not rebuke.* Here you see the wise son, and the

scorner, are put in opposition to one another, as terms directly opposite; and with great justice: for, as the teachable son is called wise, because he is capable of information, and always disposed to receive it; so the scorner, being hardened to all precepts, and above information, and consequently incapable of wisdom, is justly deemed as the worst of fools: and therefore *Solomon* adds, chap. xiv. ver. 6. *A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not.*—And the reason is evident, because he despiseth all the natural means of attaining it.

Again, The scorner is incorrigible; and therefore when he is in an error, he must continue in it. *He that reproveth a scorner (saith Solomon) getteth to himself shame.* The insolence of his nature makes all correction, however gentle, and proper, and well-timed, intolerable to him: and therefore, whoever attempts it, instead of hoping for reformation and amendment, must expect to meet with all the returns either of open rudeness, or disguised derision. For this reason *Solomon* adds, *Rebuke not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.* And again, *A scorner*

scorner loveth not one that reproveth him; neither will he go to the wise.

In the last place, The scorner is an abomination to God and man: and one reason why he is so, besides those above-mentioned, is, because he is exceedingly contentious, and consequently is the bane of society. *Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath; saith Solomon.*—

Modesty, good-nature, and affability, are the bonds of peace; and, on the other hand, insolence and contemptuous treatment are naturally productive of enmity and contention; and no peace can dwell with them: and therefore the wise man rightly adviseth, *Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.*—

Surely then it is no wonder, that a character so constituted, an incorrigible compound of folly, and insolence, and contention, should be hateful to the whole world: and we are well assured from our own experience, as well as the wise man's observation, in the 24th chapter of *Proverbs*, that in truth it is so; *The scorner is an abomination to men.* And that he is not less so to Almighty God, the same wise man affirmeth in the 3d chapter,
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ter, 34th verse, *Surely he scorneth the scorners, but he giveth grace unto the lowly.*

3dly, Another symptom of Pride is, when we value men upon those supposed advantages that are of the same nature with our own, and despise those of a different character, altho' perhaps more really and truly valuable: and this may be termed professional, or stational vanity; as it ariseth from a high opinion of the excellence of that station, or profession, or condition of life, we happen to be placed in: and this vanity seems to run through all orders and conditions of men. Thus a soldier is apt to think every thing contemptible, in comparison with his man of honour and gallantry. And as the *Turks* are a race of men wholly illiterate, a scholar is at this day the name of the greatest reproach among them that they can think of: and a neighbouring nation, often at variance with them, upon other accounts, are not ill agreed with them in this. The mere scholar is apt to think as meanly of the bravest unlettered hero; and the man of noble birth equally contemns, and is often the contempt of both, and with equal reason. Now this vanity is plainly owing to a poor partiality
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for our own station and character, and ariseth from our ignorance of the excellence of other employments and conditions of life, and their usefulness to mankind; and therefore it needs no other imputation than this, that it is the effect of a mean capacity, and narrow thinking: for nothing is more evident than that the honourableness of every imployment and condition in the world, is to be measured by its usefulness to mankind; and those that are most beneficial, are ever to be most esteemed and honoured. Now these may be distinguished into such as are necessary to the being, and such as are necessary to the well-being of mankind; and the latter are always to be preferred; and those employments that are of most use to many, before those that are of use to few: and therefore government is more honourable than any other condition of life, because a good governor is the greatest benefactor to the greatest number of mankind. And forasmuch as true religion and virtue tend more to promote, and to preserve, the real happiness of mankind, than any or all other things whatsoever; therefore the teachers of true religion and virtue are, under the governors
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of society, the greatest benefactors to mankind. And, in general, the guiding and directing parts of society, are more honourable, because more beneficial, than the guided; as the eyes are more excellent than the hands or feet, and the understanding than either. Upon this principle, a good school-master is, perhaps, one of the most honourable employments in the commonwealth: not according to the fantastic schemes of honour that have obtained in the world, but according to the eternal laws of reason and truth.

The last symptom of Pride that I shall mention, is the proneness and promptness observable in some men, of vaunting their own virtue or original, or exploits, upon all occasions; and making themselves, and their ancestors, their perpetual theme: for this is a sure indication that they are full of themselves. And this humour too often carries men into a vain ostentation of power, capacity, birth, and the like; than which nothing can be more ridiculous. And therefore *Solomon* rightly adviseth, *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.* Praise indeed is a debt, justly

justly due to worth and merit of every kind, from the whole world; and they who withhold it, where it is due, are as unjust in that instance, as they can be in any other: but then it is a debt much better received than exacted; received as an honour, than exacted as a right. This was a vanity that seems to have reigned remarkably among the *Corinthians*; and St. Paul rebukes it with a modesty, and an address, the most becoming and amiable that can be imagined: for although he was of more value in the sight of God, than any, or perhaps all those of that city whom he was appointed to instruct; yet he did not dare to assert it by self-praise: *For we dare not (says he) make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves amongst themselves, are not wise: but we (says the apostle) will not boast of things without our measure.* There is no such thing as perfection in man. All human excellencies are comparative; and had those vain *Corinthians* estimated theirs by those of their teacher, they had been sufficiently humbled. He was a man distinguished by God, with great accomplishments and endowments:

dowments: his faith was pure, his piety fervent; his zeal for the service and honour of God, strong and steady; his life one series of studying to do good; his learning extensive, his address decent and masterly, and in the perfection of what the polite world calls good breeding; his judgment clear, his stile sublime, and his eloquence unequalled: and yet all these could not secure him the honour he well deserved from a vain and a self-sufficient people, whose united talents and merits were contemptible upon the comparison: yet all the ill treatment he received from them, operated only to his own greater humiliation in the sight of God, and more fervent prayers for their amendment. Happy are all those ministers and servants of JESUS CHRIST, who can follow the example of his patience, and his piety.

And thus I have done with the several symptoms of Pride. But here it is proper to observe, That since a distinction of the several ranks and orders of men is necessary to the government of the world, therefore a proper support of that distinction is not Pride, because it is necessary and useful, and consequently not faulty: and therefore for us to interpret

terpret this conduct in our superiors, as the effect of Pride, is an argument of Pride in ourselves; and is, in reality, mistaking our own Pride for the Pride of other men. But, on the other hand, we should remember, that this support of distinction is proper only in public characters, and in discharge of duty to the public, because it is the public that requires it: whereas, in private, it is more becoming to forget distinctions; and rather to receive respect than to require it, or even seem to expect it: and therefore, in that capacity, men would do well to distinguish themselves by humanity, good-nature, and affability; perhaps, too, by the lustre of those talents that have already distinguished them to the world, and raised them above the common level: for we should always remember, that good talents were bestowed by the Almighty God, for the ease, the pleasure, and the benefit of mankind, and should always be employed as they were intended. All superiority of one man over another, was intended, as well for the good of those who are governed, as of those that bear rule, and therefore should always be directed to the ends for which it was designed; should
always

always be employed in such a manner, as to make men find it a happiness to have superiors.

Farther yet, Consciousness of a man's own worth, doth by no means denominate him proud, provided that he doth not over-rate it. For men to know their own merit, is no more a fault than it is to see clearly, or to hear distinctly. It is in many cases necessary to know it, in order to make a right use of it. For example, If a man could not distinguish fortitude from rashness, in his own character, as well as in that of other men, his virtue would be useless at best, and, perhaps, pernicious: and so in other instances.

St. *Paul* is a very remarkable instance to this purpose; for altho' he had as much humility at heart, as perhaps any man ever was blessed with; yet there were occasions, wherein he was forced to assert his own talents and endowments, and the distinctions bestowed upon him by Almighty God. And indeed it was scarcely possible to be avoided, when he found men, whose capacities and manners were every way contemptible upon
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the comparison, preferred to him. The case was this:

St. Paul had as much zeal for true religion, and every thing relating to it, as a good man should have. However, there were among the *Corinthians* some sanctified, hypocritical Pharisees, who, under the shew of superior piety, and more exalted zeal for the glory of God, made it their business to vilify the apostle upon all occasions, to decry his zeal, his piety, his talents, and merits of every kind, and magnify their own. These insolent vaunters the apostle could not bear, tho' his people could. He well knew the folly and deformity of such a character; but, since this vanity opened a way to their favour, even where it was ill founded; a man, who became *all things to all men, that he might gain some*, was sufficiently justified in asserting solid merit, in opposition to specious hypocrisy. Seeing (says he) *that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also; for ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves be wise: for, ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage; i. e. if a man lead and govern you as he pleases, like so many slaves and vassals: ye suffer, if a man devour you; i. e. if, under*

pretence for more zeal of charity, but in reality to enrich and exalt himself, he extort more from you than you are able to expend to those uses. *Te suffer, if a man take of you; if a man exalt himself.*

And, after all, who were these vain vaunters? Why, in reality, they were vile impostors, children of the devil; but seeming saints! *For such (says St. Paul) are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ! And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light: therefore it is no great thing, if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.*

The apostle then proceeds to assert his own character, and undoubted superiority over such wretches. And surely nothing could be more grievous to a man of his character, than to be reduced to the necessity of entering into such a comparison. It put all his humility to the proof: and no humility had a harder trial. But it was a debt he owed, not only to himself, but to the world; and it must be paid. Nothing but the preference given to a vile impostor could provoke him
to

to self-praise: and possibly nothing else could
so entirely justify him in it, as the iniquity
and insult of such a preference.

And thus having shewn you the several
symptoms of Pride, and those appearances
that are sometimes mistaken for it; I should
now proceed, in the *third* place, to shew
the ordinary causes of this vice, how foolish
and ill-founded it is in all its pretences.

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now proceed, in every part place, to show
the ordinary causes of this vice, how foolish

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O R

P R I D E:

How foolish and ill-founded it is in
all its pretensions.

THE
TRUE NATURE
OF
PRIDE:

How *foolish* and *ill-founded* it is in
all its PRETENCES.

SERMON XX

Prov. XXVI. 12

TIT

Seeft thou a man wife in his own con-

science? There were those who

than of him



Having words, and

nature of pride, and laid before you the

various symptoms by which it may be known

and the evils of each symptom

I now proceed to the first place, to

number up the ordinary causes of rather

occasions of this vice, and to show you how

foolish and ill-founded it is in all its pro-

ferences.

And the first cause of pride, that I shall

mention is Learning

When men have succeeded in far in the

pursuit of knowledge, as to find they have

surpassed those of their own condition or

character

[421]

S E R M O N XX.

PROV. XXVI. 12.

Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.

HAVING, in a former discourse on these words, explained and stated the true nature of Pride, and laid before you the several symptoms by which it may be known, and the evils of each symptom;

I now proceed, in the *third* place, to number up the ordinary causes, or rather occasions of this vice; and to shew you how foolish and ill-founded it is in all its pretences.

And the first cause of Pride that I shall mention is Learning.

When men have succeeded so far in the pursuit of knowledge, as to find they have surpassed those of their own condition or

character, their vain imagination immediately goes to work, and swells them into beings of a superior order. Their genius is far above the common standard; and it is fit they should let mankind know it, by asserting that pre-eminence that is due to them. And hence it is that a learned fool is oftentimes the most intolerable of all others; because he hath acquired such a degree of vanity from his knowledge, as is sufficient to inspire him with assurance enough to say any thing that comes into his head, however shocking. Perhaps, too, he hath acquired volubility of speech, to deliver his conceits with ease; and both these naturally produce one another. His vanity prompts him to display every quaint conceit that comes into his thoughts: and every fine conceit that falls from him, inflames his vanity. And thus he goes on to admire himself, and to become ridiculous and intolerable to all the rest of the world.

Now this is, perhaps, one of the most desperate and irreclaimable characters in life. Error and misconduct of any other kind are within the reach of correction and admonition;

tion; but Pride, learned Pride, is incapable of either. And therefore Solomon's observation in my text, is, in this case, strictly true: *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.* A man of the meanest capacity, if he be not intoxicated with Pride, is at least capable of correction and admonition; and is also, for the most part, of an humble and reachable disposition; and consequently is in a capacity of being modeled into something useful to mankind, at least of being made inoffensive, if not useful; whereas this other creature is a common and incorrigible nuisance: and the best that can be hoped of him, is, to become at last a prey to flatterers and sycophants, and devoured, as the other corruptions of the earth are, by rooks and vermin.

Now nothing is more lamentable, than that the corruption of the best things should thus become the worst. Learning is, without question, of excellent use to society, and contributes more to our well-being than any thing else in the world, except religion: forasmuch as it tends at once to improve the understandings and the morals of mankind,

together

together with every useful and social action and, in consequence of these, to direct and bless their lives. And therefore a man of learning (I mean of useful learning) is justly a character of great esteem in the world, because it is of excellent use: but then it is a character, which, rightly considered, tends much more to inspire humility than conceit; forasmuch as it brings men into a clearer sight of their own infirmities and corruptions, and discovers that vast extent of human ignorance, which the unthinking part of the world are utterly unacquainted with. It teacheth them, that every point of matter is too big for their utmost researches. The air we breathe, the light of the sun, and the dust we tread upon, all equally confound their inquiries; their own being, most of all: the nature of the soul and body; the alliance of such opposites; the cohesion of the parts of matter, amazing and inscrutable to the wisest of mortals; neither can he say, why he doth not moulder into dust, why he doth not crumble into the original of his being, even whilst he is meditating upon it: and therefore nothing but the last degree of ignorance,

norance, ignorance of our own wants and weakness, can be a just, I mean, a tolerable excuse of vanity. But, however, if men of learning will be preferred to others; if they will be more honourable, let them be more useful: let them answer the ends of their learning; let them do more good to mankind than other mortals; and then let them reap that esteem which is the just and natural reward of beneficence.

Another cause of pride is Wealth. Now wealth is honourable, on account of the power that attends it; I mean, the power of doing good: for, if this power be well directed, it is great and godlike; but if it be either unemployed or employed to evil purposes, to defraud, and to oppress, it is then, in the first case useless, and, in the latter, detestable and devilish. And indeed it is neither wealth, nor power, nor knowledge, that are in themselves honourable: no; it is the virtue that conducts and disposes of them to the good of mankind. And therefore *Aristotle* rightly observes, in the 4th Book of his *Ethics*, that *in truth the good man alone is honourable; but if fortune be added*

to his virtue, then he is more so. Whereas they that have the fortune without the virtue, become insolent and contumacious, and would be deemed honourable, although they do none of those things that render men really so, but quite contrary. As wealth, when joined with virtue, is really honourable; it becomes yet more so, when it is the effect of honesty and virtuous industry; for then it is honourable, both in its origin, and its use: and yet, even then, God knows, it is no just foundation for Pride; because both the abilities that acquired it, and the good dispositions to make a right use of it, were both the blessings of Almighty God upon us. For *who maketh thee, oh man, to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?* Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? And therefore we have infinitely more reason to be solicitous how to discharge our duty in the stewardship of a great fortune, than to be vain for being employed in it: but if our wealth should be found to be the effect of villainy, and evil arts (as it often is raised without any one good

good quality, and from the union of a great many evil, and should also be employed as it was acquired, to injury, and to oppression, then it is doubly infamous, and serves only to complete the most hateful character, the most detestable monster among mankind, a great wealthy villain! and therefore nothing can be more foolish or unjust than Pride that is founded upon such a title.

I might mention here, among the other occasions of Pride, beauty, strength, and other endowments of the body; but these are so casual and transient, and, generally speaking, of such little consequence to any good purpose of life, that they are scarce worth mentioning; at least, since they are such very vain and perishing possessions, surely we may say of them, as the wise man doth of riches: *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?* And therefore whoever pride themselves upon any of these, are emphatically foolish: and the only wise conduct they that enjoy these little temporary advantages can possibly fall into, is this, that, whilst nature continues to adorn their bodies, they apply all their diligence to imbelish and improve

improve their minds, that so they may be stored with a succession of graces: which (when their outward form fails) will continue to render them always agreeable.

The last sort of Pride that I shall mention is, the Pride of ancestors; and this is, of all others the most foolish and ill founded. And indeed, it is astonishing how any man that thinks should ever take it into his head to imagine that there is any merit in being born; for this is really the case, in relation to the pride of birth: and it is so very absurd, that it is no wonder if, in the far greater part of the world, nobility is made personal; and nothing but a man's own merit, can intitle him to any degree of distinction and regard.

It is true there is a presumption of generous principles and inclinations, in the issue of a great and good man, as of generous fruit from the scion of a generous stock: but if this fail, as it too often doth, surely the virtues we had no share, in cannot possibly make any part of our praise, unless the stupid offspring of great benefactors to mankind be revered, like their statues, on account of
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SECT. 2. OF PRIDE.

some outward resemblance. And therefore let the worthless issue of great men remember, that, (although the titles of their fathers descend to them, yet if those talents and dispositions, which ennoble these titles, do not accompany them, their quality is in truth a much greater reproach than recommendation to them. Worthless men, that pride themselves upon the merit of their ancestors, would do well to reflect what merit the head of gold gave to the brazen thighs and clayey feet of *Nebuchadnezzar's* image. Nay, even acquired nobility, which (if founded upon merit) is of all others the most honourable, should take care to be endowed with humility, upon many accounts: I shall mention only two.

1st, Because it hath attained its reward; and therefore should acquiesce and be thankful, and in consequence humble.

2^{dly}, Because treating his inferiors with Pride, is, in a man of that character, reproaching his own former condition.

And thus I have done with all the causes and occasions of Pride; and shewn you how foolish and ill-founded it is in all its Pretences.

Let me observe to you, on this occasion, That there were two institutions, of Divine appointment, under the Mosaic dispensation, of admirable use to repress the human vanity, and humble the haughty heart before the throne of God.

The first of these is to be found in the 23d chapter of *Leviticus*, at the 26th and following verses. It was a day of solemn and universal humiliation annually appointed to the people of *Israel*, for afflicting their souls, and making an atonement for their sins; under this dreadful denunciation upon every soul that profaned or neglected the observance of it; that he should be cut off from his people. *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying: Also on the tenth day of this seventh month, there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you. And ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your GOD. For whatsoever soul it shall be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off*

off from among his people: and whatsoever soul it be that doth any work on that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. He then adds, that this shall be an institution of perpetual observance; *a statute for ever throughout your generations; in all your dwellings:* and that this humiliation was to begin on the eve of the ninth day, and continue till the eve of the tenth.

To this day of solemn, national humiliation among the *Jews*, hath succeeded the first day of *Lent*, in the Christian institution: a day as utterly disregarded among many Christians, and by some even of the most serious and exalted Christian characters, as if the observance of it were founded on no authority of GOD, or institution of infinite wisdom, or pure and primitive Christian piety. GOD of his infinite mercy amend us, and deliver us from the guilt and horror of this profane, unhallowed spirit, which is gone out amongst us.

The next institution of Divine appointment, and of excellent use to humble the haughty heart of man, is to be found in the 26th chapter of *Deuteronomy*, at the first

and following verses. The ordinance was this; When the *Israelites* were settled in the land which GOD had promised to their fathers, they were each of them obliged to bring an annual offering of their first-fruits unto the place that he should chuse; and when the priest had placed them before the altar, they were to humble themselves before GOD, recounting the distresses, the misery, and captivity of their forefathers, and the mighty deliverances wrought for them by the hand of GOD, for which they now brought an humble offering of their first-fruits.— *A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few; and became there a nation, great, mighty and populous; and the Egyptians evil-intreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: And when we cried to the LORD GOD of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and on our oppression: and the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt, with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders;*

wonders; and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land that floweth with milk and honey: and now, behold! I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me.

Alas! my brethren, were we annually to recollect our origin, and the blessings bestowed, and the deliverances wrought for us by the goodness and mercy of GOD; how many of us would be obliged to recollect and recognize our ancestors, in terms of much greater and more mortifying humiliation than that of, *A Syrian ready to perish was my father!* How many of us would be obliged to derive our pedigree from a much lower and meaner origin, from slaves and sycophants, from robbers and murderers! in one word, from vice and villainy of every kind! and the best, the very best among the sons of *Adam*, be obliged to cry out before the altar of GOD, *A sinner ready to perish was my father; a vile miscreant, enslaved to Satan, and doom'd to eternal misery, till thou, O GOD, didst, in thine infinite mercy, interpose, to redeem*

him from final destruction, by the sacrifice of thy blessed Son JESUS CHRIST, and exalt him into an heir of everlasting salvation; for which we owe thee this our tribute of praise and thanksgiving, our annual, our hourly, our endless humiliation before thine altar.

After all that hath been said on this subject, need I add, that Pride is the most unphilosophical, as well as the most unchristian principle in human nature? Unwise it must be, forasmuch as it never fails at once to multiply our defects, and inflame every other vice in our nature; and that too with this unhappy circumstance, that, whilst it hides them from ourselves, it exposes and doubles them to the rest of the world. More than this, it multiplies the human infirmities, by mistaking and obtruding them all for perfections. The proud man's effrontery is fortitude; his rudeness is sincerity, his loud laugh, wit, and his supercilious dulness, wisdom: and certainly there cannot be a more foolish or unphilosophic principle in human nature, than that which at once multiplies the
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the possessor's infirmities, and hides them from himself.

But, alas! if this were all, it were to be endured. The most dreadful character of Pride is, that it is utterly unchristian. It is the direct contradiction to the Christian virtue of humility: and the same haughtiness of heart, which carries men to look down on their own species, too often lifts up their heads to heaven, and fights against God. There is not a more hateful character among men, than that of *Solomon's* scorner; and of all scorners, the scorner of things sacred is the most execrable.

Heaven-born humility inquires after divine truths with care; examines them with modesty, and the deference due from a being confessedly imperfect and subordinate, to wisdom infinite, unerring, and unsearchable; determines with candour, and submits with reverence. Pride, mortal Pride, not inquires, but questions; not examines, but arraigns; not submits, but decides; questions with arrogance, arraigns with effrontery, and decides with disdain; fastidious,

dious, unruly, self-will'd, self-sufficient. O, my brethren, pray against Pride; pray earnestly, without ceasing, to that GOD who *resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the lowly*; that he would submit our souls, with humble resignation, to the dispensations and declarations of his infinite wisdom and goodness: abasing ourselves before him, obeying and adoring! *casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against GOD, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of CHRIST*: beseeching GOD, in the gentleness and meekness of JESUS CHRIST; that he would guard, that he would shield us from unchristian, antichristian Pride; that he would keep us stedfast in his holy faith and fear, *to do justly, to love mercy, and, above all, to walk humbly with our GOD.*

Which he of his infinite mercy grant, thro' the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST. 14 NO 63

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